NĀG SEN OF MILIND PAṄHÖ

DR. P. K. KAUL

Rivers wheather in India or elsewhere have always nurtured rich civilizations and cultures. Chināb and Marwā rivers of Kastwār which find mention in Rig Veda's Nadi Sukt, indicates the antiquitarian value of this region. River Chinab and its many tributaries have carved out many high land vallys which have been ideal places for meditation and hermitage for the men of spirtuality.

Buddhism was prevelant in these mountain valleys is indicated by many place names including that of Nag Seni in Kashtwar associated with the celeberated Buddhist Monk and Philosopher Nag Sen, who, according to Milind Panho, defeated the great Indo-Bactrian king Menānder in a religious discussion and made him a devote Buddhist around 2nd Century B.C.

Buddhism in Ancient India seems to have travelled from its seat of Political power in the west i.e. Sakla (Sialkot) and Kashmir up along the course of Chandrabhāgā and its tributaries into the Sivalak hills of Jammu and Himalyan middle mountains and further up into Lahul, Pangi, Ladakh and Tibet regions.

In the present Monograph an attempt has been made to evaluate the ancient antiquity of mountain Valleys of Chinab, particularly that of Kashtwār and, and its contribution to the evolution of Buddhism in the light of Nag Sen's biographical sketch.

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Milind Paṅhö

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PREFACE

Rivers whether in India or elsewhere in the world have always played a prominent role in the evolution of various civilizations and cultures. Himālyan middle mountains and Shivālik hill region of Jammu, drained by mighty river Chināb and its various tributaries, which have carved out many mountain valleys, provide adequate material for the study of history and culture of the people inhabiting them, but unfortunately, very little efforts have so far been made in this direction.

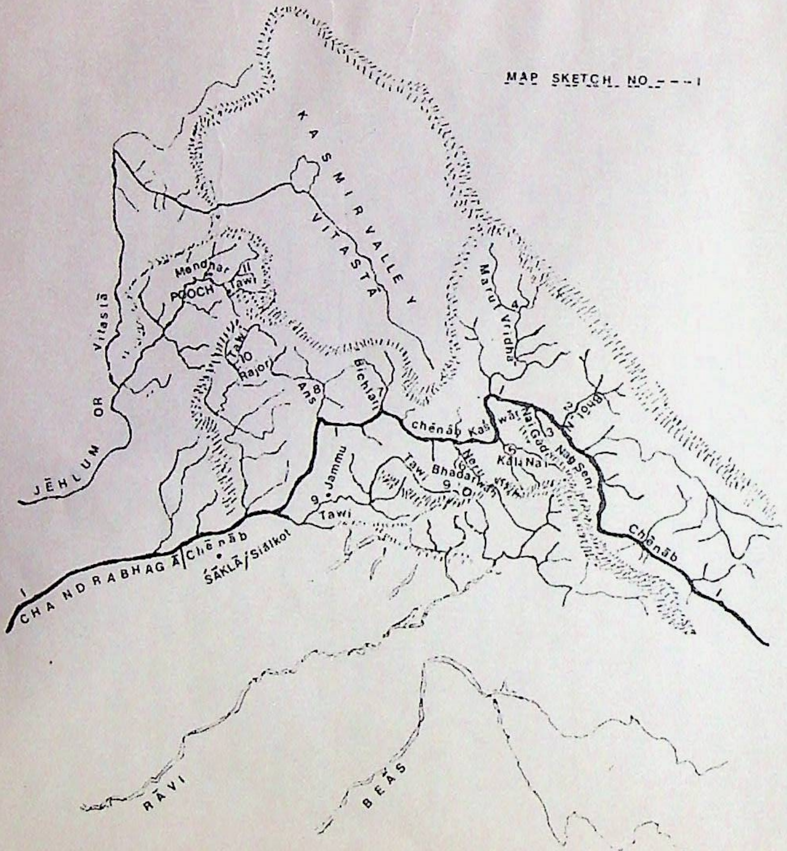
Chināb and Maṛwā rivers of Kaśtwāṛ find mention in *Rigveda* by the name of Asikanyā and Marutvridhā. Asikanyā literally means, the daughter of the sword. The historians of Alexander have named it Arkisine i.e.river of ill omens.This Greek word for this river is no doubt derived from the Vedic term Asikanyā and as the history confirms, it proved to be a river of ill-omen and the daughter of the sword, not only for Alexander, who during his invasion of India had a tough time in the hill region drained by Chināb, but also for another Indo-Scythian King Menānder, who was defeated in a historic religious discussion with Nāg Sen, the illustrious son of the Chināb Valley, and who's biographical sketch forms the subject-matter of the present study. 2

Ptolmy (A.D.150) calls this river by the name of Sandalbal which indicates, that around this time , the river had. begun to be called as Chandrabhāgā, the etymological meaning of the term still remaining un-explained. By the time of 7th or 8th century the term 'Chandrabhāgā' for the river seems to have become quite prevalent, as we find this term being used in Neelmat Purāṇa, with a Brahmanic etymological explanation. It has been recorded there that its waters are cool like the rays of the moon and torn forth by the God moon चन्द्रमा सुशीतला जला; चन्द्रेन विभिन्ना

In Muslim period, the Sultāns, Mughals and Pathān Kings remained mostly confined to the plains of Punjab, where the river was known by the name of Chināb. Muslim kings did not move beyond Shivālik hills, where the river was known by the name of Chandrabhāgā? Traditional fear of this river seems to have prevented Muslim Sultans and Mughals to penetrate into the interior mountains, and accordingly we find it named as Chināb, presuming it to be water coming from the Chinese territory.

Vigne (1839 A.D.) calls the river by the name of Chināb and Foster who came to Kashmir around 1783 A.D. calls it Chanānu, derived as it appears from Chānāb. Vigne prefers to derive the present appellation of Chināb from Chāndāb (i.e. water from the moon) rather than Chināb (i.e.water from China), probably as it does not flow from any territory in China. Vigne's Chandāb has a clear co-relation with *Neelmat Purāna's* etymological explanation of the word, and Vigne seems to have been informed about Chandāb by some Kashmiri Brahmin. Whether Chāndāb or Chināb, the river is popularly known by the name of Chināb everywhere now.

However the nomenclature Chandrabhāgā in recent times has a new etymological explanation to the term and an interesting geographical account of the mountain region through which it flows. The river is formed by the confluence of two Himālayan streams, namely, MAP SKETCH NO.---1


KASMIR VALLEY
VITASTĀ
Marut Vridha
4
Mendhar
11
Tawi
POOCH
Tawi
10
Rajori
Ans
8
Bichlari
7
Vitastā
JĒHLUM OR
chēnāb
Kashtwār
Bhōt N.
2
Nai Gad
3
Nag Seni
Kali Nai
5
Neru
6
Bhadarwah
9
Tawi
Jammu
9
Tawi
Chēnāb
1
CHANDRABHAGĀ
Chēnāb
SĀKLĀ/Siālkot
1
RĀVI
BEĀS

Chandra Bhāgā Valley
in
The Hills OF Jammu

(MOUNTAIN TRIBUTARIES OF CHENĀB)

1. chenāb
2. Bhōt Nallā
3. Nai Gad
4. Marut Vridhā (maṛvā)
5. Kālī Nāi
6. Neru
7. Bichlaṛi-Banihāl
8. Ans -

Guarded Slopes

9. Tawi - Jammu
10. Tawi - Rājouri
11. Tawi - Poonch

Chandrā and Bhāgā, which originate from the Himālyan heights of Bārā Lāchā (16000′ or 4879 mts), separately from its two opposite water-sheds, in the Lāhul region. The Chandrā stream circumscribes the Bārā Lāchā mountain slopes for 200 kilometers before joining Bhāgā stream at Tāndi, and before doing so Chandrā joins a high altitude mountain lake, called Suraj Tāl, near the Bārā Lāchā Pass, at one of its ends and re-emerges at the other. The Bhāgā covers a distance of about 90 kilometers before joining Chandrā.

After traversing a distance of about 200 kilometers in the Pāngi Valley, the river enters the Pādar region of Jammu near Alwās,having an altitude of some 1800′ meters, and then passing through the Nāg Senī region of Kaśtwāṛ Jangalwāṛ, Dodā Sirāj, Rāmban and Reāsi the river looses much of its turbulance from Akhnoor onwards. During the course of the journey of this river from Alwās to Akhnoor, some half a dozen tributaries join the river in the mountains of Jammu. Some of these tributaries have themselves carved out very beautiful and charming highland valleys and mountain pastures in the region through which these flow. Among the right bank tributaries of Chināb in Jammu, mention may be made of Bhutnā, Maṛusonder or Maṛiv Sind,Golan Nāṛ, Lidderkhol, Bichlari-Bihāltā or Biśāltā and Rojouri Tawi. Bhutnā near Pāḍar means Bhot-Nā or rivulet of Bhots, Maru Sonder is a joint name for Marutvridhā and Sonder or Sindhu of Kaśtwāṛ mountains, Golan comes from the syṁthan side and Lidder Khol drains the mountain slopes of Sirāj and Desā area. Ans is its tributary from the Gulāb Garh area, while Biśāltā drains the Banihāl valley and its adjoining slopes.

The left bank tributaries of the Chināb in Jammu form many Tawī's and Devikās of Jammu region, the

Anji of Reāsi, Pinktā near Rāmban (Maitrā), Basī Nālā of Batote, Riggī of Khasāl, Neru of Bhadarwāh, Kalī Nai of Bhales and Nai Gad of Nāg Senī region. These rivers and streams have carved out many small highland valleys and hanging mountain pockets, on these Himālayan slopes, which had been very safe places to live in peace and without fear, of being plundered by medieval despondants. These were also ideal places for meditation, hermitage and peaceful living for the men of sprituality. Some of these places, streams and valleys have found mention in the ancient and medieval literature also. To quote a few examples we may mention the name of Tawī of Poonch and Rājouri which finds mention in *Neelmat Purāna* as Taushit Bhāskrā. Some feel that Ans of Gul Gulābgārh and Mariv of Kaśṭwāṛ stand for Ajikiyā and Marutvrindhā of Vedas. We have some nine Tawīs, four Devikās and three Sindhus, following through this mountain region. The nomenclature of almost all mountain valleys of Chināb and its tributaries in Jammu has a strong Sanskrit base. Marutvridhā (rendered old and barren by the winds), Kaśṭwāṛ (that which has been subdued after encountering difficulties), Bhadrāvakāsh (a fine place to rest), Khaśāl (the inhabitance of Khaśās, Rāmban (the Jungles of Rāmā), Banihal (derived from Banśālā), Chanderkot, Maitreyā (if after Maitrāyinī?), Sunder Banī, Rājā Purī, (Rajouri), Parṇoṭsvā (the festival of leaves or greenery etc. All this indicate the existence of a strong Brahmanic tradition, prevalent in the region, in the ancient and medieval times.

But prior to the coming of this Brahmanic tradition, the Jammu mountain region must be expected to have some Buddhist religious foundation. It has been observed that one of the enigmas of Jammu's religious history has been the absence of any Buddhist foundation in the province. The puzzle was all the more surprising in the light of the fact that Buddhism had one of its prominent seats in the vicinity of Jammu, i.e. at Siālkot and Akhnoor.

The positive evidence of a Buddhist establishment at Ambārān, near Akhnoor, 20 miles west of Jammu, was brought to light by Charless Fabri only a few decades ago. He was an art critic and had made a detailed examination of the site and the remains that were found. He came to the conclusion that there had been a large monastery and a stūpā at the place. Among the terracottas found, were Buddha heads, Toros of bodies and pieces of drapery, belonging to Buddha figures, or figures of monks and laymen and women, profusely decorated. He considered the terracottas from Akhnoor as superb pieces of art, closely related to the terracottas found at Ushkūr (near Bārāmullā) in Kashmir, and assigned them a date of 5th to 7th century A.D.

Buddhism was prevalent in these mountain valleys at one time is indicated by some of the place names also. According to the author of Tāiekh Rājgān-e-Jammu, Thakur Kāhn Chand Billāwariā, Udhampur was known as Budhpur till 1846 A.D. when Māhārajā Gulāb Singh renamed it after his son. Village name Bādwāni in Sāmbā is said to have been derived from Budhwānī and the place names Devā, Sangaldān (gift to Sanghā), Dhammkund are also Buddhist in character. Sh.J.N.Ganhār in his recent book "Temples and Shrines of Jammu" has expressed his deep curiosity over "the striking resemblance which the name Nāg Senī region of Pāḍar Kaśtwāṛ bears to the celebrated monk Nāg Sen of 2nd century B.C., who defeated the great Indo-Scythian King Menānder in a meta-physical discussion"

According to him, one is tempted to think that the name Nāg Senī is derived from Nāg Sen. But this particular presumption is not a new one. Such doubts were expressed earlier also.

Around 1954 A.D. some Kaṣhmiri writer in an article published in Daily Mārtand Srinagar had mentioned that King Menānder's Guru Nāg Sen resided at Kaśtwāṛ, but when called upon by another Kashmiri intellectual hawk to adduce proof in support of his contentions he failed to do so. Probably Kashmiri intellectual class wanted to have the credit of Nāg Sen belonging to the valley, as they claim that the celebrated work Milind Panho had been first written in Kashmiri and then translated into Pāli and Sinhāli.[2] Gulām Mustafā Ishrat Kashmiri, Mohi-ud-din Hājni and Ratnākar Pandit in their works pertaining to the history of Kaśtwāṛ have also expressed similar doubts.

And it was a sheer chance, while on an examination duty of the University of Jammu at Kaśtwāṛ, that I had an informal chat with one of the local Education Officers, namely D.C.Sharma, who informed me about Nāg Senī region of Kaśtwāṛ as a place of great Archaeological and antiquirian interest in the area. He also expressed his doubts about the place being the probable site of birth and education of Nāg Sen, about whom he had just read a passing reference in Mr. Fidda Mohd. Hussnanin's booklet titled Buddhist Kashmir. But he too could not provide any logical or supportive evidence to prove his contentions. Being inspired and finding some urge arising within my soul, I travelled the mountain country thoroughly in the coming years, investigated the sites, collected the relevant records and other reference material and felt assured that Nāg Senī region of Kaśtwāṛ and its adjioning slopes were place of Nāg Sen's birth, education, learning and meditation beyond any shadow of doubt, as discussed in this book. The famous work Milind Panhō assigned to his discussion with King Menānder forms one of the books of famous indological series entitled "Sacred Books of the East" translated and commented by learned Indologists under the guidance of German Sanskrit scholar MaxMuller. "Milind Panhō" has been translated and edited by Rhys David as well as by V.Treneckner but lacks details about Nāgsen and his biographical sketch.

Nāg Senī in Kaśṭwāṛ is not a particular village but a group of villages, slopy tract between the villages Chhichhā and Dūl, the site of the present 690 megawatt Dūl Hasti Project, the slopes drained by Naigad and some other small mountain streams. Some places of archaeological interest and antiquirian value, pertaining to the medieval times, still exist in the region.

Buddhism in ancient India seems to have travelled from its seat of political power in the West (i.e.Śākalā or Siālkot) farther up along the course of Chandrabhāgā and its tributaries, through Ambārān (Akhnoor) to Sangaldān, Dhammkund, Maitreyā, Chamalwās, Banshālā (Banihāl), Sirāj, Udhyānpur, Barshilā (Brahmshilā), Kānini, Ajāl, Jakyās, Kaśṭwāṛ, Nāg Seni Alwās, Machel and further up into Lāhul, Pāngī and many other Himalyan mountain valleys of Jammu and Chināb. To reach the interior mountain regions of Ladākh and Tibet it must have used other routes passing through Kashmir also.

In the present monograph an attempt has been made to evaluate the ancient antiquity of the mountain valleys of Chināb in Jammu and their contribution to the evolution of Buddhism in the light of Nāg Sen's biographical sketch and other related developments. The monograph is the 1st of the series in the antiquirian evaluation of the region. The other few are just to follow.

I hope this humble presentation of mine will cordially be received by the intellectual world.

Sādhnālyā —**P.K.Kaul**

9th November 1994.

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1. In addition to Tawī of Jammu, we have Sukh Tawī, Munāwar Tawī, Rajouri Tawī and Later Bārekh Tawī of Sunder Banī, Nikkī Tawi and Kāli Tawī in Jammu, Tawī of Poonch and Taushī or Tawī of Chambā near Rāj Nagar. The four Devikās of Jammu region are that of Sudh Māhādev, Udhampur, Purmandal and Uttar Bani and three Sindhus are those of Ladākh, Shādipur in Kashmir and Sonder in Maṛwā (Kaśtwaṛ).
2. *Kashmiri Shāiri* - Sahitya Academy, New Delhi.

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iv) Śukā v)Assāgutthḥ vi) Mahāsen
vii)Sonuttur viii) Rohan ix)Āyu Päl

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i) Jumbū Dvīp ii) Sāglā iii)Kañjaṅgal
iv) Yugāndhār v) Vattanīya Hermitage
vi) Demzī vii)Guarded slopes
viii) Vijyam Vothu ix)Vejanta Palace
x) Ketumatī Mansion xi) Pātlīputra
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ABBREVIATIONS

A.I.	Ancient India by V.D. Mahajan.
A.I.U.	The age of imperial unity -D.C. Sircar
B.K. Fidda	Buddhist Kashmir - F.M. Hussanain
B.K. Sarla	History of Buddhism in Kashmir - Dr. Sarla Khosla
Budh	Buddhism - Copleston D.D.1882.
C.H.I.	Cambridge History of India Vol.I -E.J. Rapson
E.H.C.K.	Early History and Culture of Kashmir - Dr.S.C. Ray
Excel	The Daily Excelsior, Jammu (N.P.)
G.B.I.	Greeks in Bactria and India - W.W.Tarn
H.R.F.B.	History of rise and fall of Buddhism in India—S.C.Dutt
I.G.	Indo-Greeks—Prof. A.K. Narain
I.G.C.	Indo-Greek Coins- Mehta Vishisht Dev Mohan
J.A.S.B	Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal
K.C.A.	Kashmir and Central Asia - P.N. Kaul Bomzai
K.T.	Kashmir Times Jammu (Daily N.P.)
K.T.A.	Kashmir through the ages- Gausha Lal Kaul ✓
M.K.	Monuments of Kashmir - R.C. Kak
M.P.Vad	Milind Panho— R.D. Vadekar
M.P. Treck	Milind Panho - V.Treneckner
M.P. Rhys	Milind Panho - Rhys Davids
M.P.Bhikśu	Milind Prashan Bhikshu - Jagdish Kashyap

N.W.I.	North West India 2nd century B.C. Vishishit Dev Mohan
Poliby	Polibius Historiae. Ed. & Trans. - W.R. Paton
P.H.K.	Political History of Kashmir - K.S. Sexena
R.T.	Rajtrangini - M.A. Stien
T.H.Beal.	Travels of Huen Tsang, Samuel Beal
T.S.J.	Temples and Shrines of Jammu.Ganhar J.N.
T.S.W.	Tree and Serpent Worship. Furguson
T.K.Mohi	Tariekh Kaśtwāṛ - Mohi-ud-Din Hajni
T.D.D.	Tariekh Dogra Des N.D. Nargis
T.K.Ish.	Tariekh Kaśtwāṛ - Ishrat Kashmiri
T.H.	Tariekh Hassan- Mohd.Din Faug.

Other Abbreviations

Ch.	Chapter
F.n.	Foot note
c.f.	Carried from
§	Sub-head
	Sign expressing closed vowels.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTORY

The main contents of the celebrated work *Milind Panho* (questions of King Menānder) is a religio-philosophical discussion between Nāg Sen and King Menānder, which incidentally provides a lot of information about the Indo-Scythian ruler of Sākalā and other socio-religious conditions of the people in the mountain country of Jammu and Kashmir around second century B.C. The dramatic intellectual encounter between the contemporary political and religious giants is well narrated in *Milind Panho*, but it dos not furnish the much desired information about Nāg Sen, the hero of the whole episode and his native country. Students of Buddhist religion and thought had taken him as a ناگ سین Kashmiri,[1] but now he turned out to be a Kaśṭwāri, a mountain region of Jammu, the physical features and topography of which, fairly tallies with the description of the country of Nāg Sen's birth and learning, as mentioned in the outer story of the celebrated work. Before the subject is taken up for detailed study, it will be advisable to mention hereunder, some of the introductory informations pertaining to the celebrated work, and the scholar, and his famous discourse with equally scholarly Greeko-Bactrian King Menānder of Śākalā, as described in Milind Panho.

Menānder :-

After Ashokā (273-236 B.C.) Buddhism suffered a temporary eclipse during the reign of his successors, Jālukā and Dāmodrā. King Jālukā of Kashmir waged a ruthless war against Malecchās who probably were the Greeko-Bactrian hords trying to establish their kingdom in the territory bordering Kashmir. The history of Kashmir after Dāmodra is not certain till we come to the later Kuṣāṇas.[2] In the interregum North West India once again passed under the sway of foreigners including Greeks[3]. Tārn suggests that for a few years Demetrius was the lord of a realm which included southern Kashmir. A fragment in ptolmy gives the names of the two provinces on Menānder's home kingdom, east of Jehlum, of which Kasperiā, the Upper Valley of Jehlum, Chināb and Rāvi would correspond to Southern Kashmir[4].

Menānder was thus the Indo-Greek ruler of Gandhārā (North West India_). Eleven coin of certain kings including those of king Menānder have been located from Kashmir[5], and Kharośtī inscriptions and statues found from Lolāb Valley (North Western Kashmir) have also been preserved by Srinagar Museum[6]. He ruled over a considerable territory with his capital at Śākalā (Siālkot).

Menānder who is believed to have ruled towards the end of second century B.C. was a great scholar and an enquirer of truth. He used to spend his spare time in philosophical discussions with eminent scholars and thinkers of his time and in these discussions he invariably got the better of his adversaries . He was well versed in Purāṇas and philosophy (Darshan)

All the learned persons were afraid of him in religious discussion. In logic he was unsurpassable. His was a great personality and had won acclaim to the affection of the posterity. His genial treatment of Buddhist communities led to his characterization in Buddhist literature. He had come under the influence of Nāg Sen, the great Buddhist philosopher and thinker and was then converted to the Buddhist fold.

The Indo-Greeks , appear to have accepted the doctrine of Buddhism, and Kharośti inscriptions found at Swāt, Texilā and Kashmir (lolāb) prove the existence of Buddhism there during that period. These kings erected stūpas, constructed Vihāras and installed images of the Śākya Muni[7]. Greek writers tell us that Menānder was a great conqueror also. He is stated to have conquered more nations than Alexander himself. Surely he was the greatest of the Indo-Greek kings of India[8].

Other Indologists have recorded following observations about Menānder:

(i) "He was first a lay devotee of Buddha but afterwards left his throne, joined the Sanghā and at last became an Arhat."[9]

(ii) "He silenced the Buddhist priests in argument and drove them across the Himālays (to Rakshit Tal and Manasarovar" .[10]

As regards his political and historical career, a lot of information is available. The Greek writers tell us that Menānder was a conqueror . He is stated to have conquered more nations than Alexander himself.[11] From the variety of his coins and the wide area of their distribution , it is concluded that he was the ruler of many Kingdoms. We have come across a large number of his coins from the western districts of Uttar Pradesh. His coins are also known to have been current in Kathiāwār.[12]

According to D.C. Sircar the dominion of Menānder appears to have comprised of the Central parts of Afghānistān. north West frontier province.

Punjab, Sindh Rājputānā Kāthiāwār and probably a portion of Western Uttar Pradesh.[13]

Prof. Rapson has pointed out that the fame of Menānder as a great and just ruler was not confined to India alone. Some two centuries after his time, Plutarch recounted to the Greek world the story, how after his death in a camp, the cities of his realm contended for the honour of preserving his ashes.[14] It is thus as a philosopher and not as a mighty conqueror that Menānder like Janmejaya, the king of Kurūs and Janaka, the king of Videha in the Upanishads has won for himself an abiding fame.[15]

Milind Panho pays the following tribute to Menānder; "As a disputant he was hard to equal, harder still to overcome, the acknowledged superior of all the founders of various schools of thought. As in wisdom so in strength of body, swiftness and valour, there was found none equal to Milinda in India. He was rich, too mighty in wealth and prosperity and the number of his armed hosts knew no ends".

Capital of Menānder:

Although Menānder ruled over a great country and attacked and penetrated as far east as Mathurā, his capital was at Sāglā or Śākalā, the present Siālkot in Pakistan. According to Tarn, Sāglā in the eastern Punjāb was Menānder's capital.[16] Capleston states that Sāglā is at a distance of 12 yojans from Kashmir and 200 yojans from Kālsi.[17] We are fortunate in having the following description of the capital of Menānder's kingdom,Śākalā in the work of Minind Pahno. Siālkot finds mention in ancient and medieval history and literature as 'Śākal Dvīp , Śākalā and Siālkot. It had been a seat of political power, trade and commerce for quite a long time. In *Milind Panho* also it has been described in great details and appreciated for its geographical location and scenic beauty.

"There is in the country of Yonkas, a great center of trade, a city called Sāglā, in a delightful country well watered and hilly, abounding in parks, gardens, groves, lakes and tanks. A paradise of rivers and mountains and woods,wise Architect have laid it out and its people know of no oppression, since all their enemies and adversaries have been put down. Brave in its defense with many and various strong towers and ramparts with superb gates and entrance arch-ways, and with the Royal Citadel in its midst, white walled and deeply mounted. Well laid out are its streets, squares, cross-road and market places, well displayed are the innumerable sorts of costly merchandize with which its shops are decorated. Its streets are filled with elephants, horses, carriagesand foot passengers and crowded by men of all sorts and conditions.[18]

In Milind Panho Sākalā has been repeatedly mentioned as situated in Jambu Dvīp, which probably indicates the antiquity of the region.[19]

Nāg Sen:

Nāgsen was a great Buddhist saint, scholar and philosopher, to whom credit goes for having defeated King Menānder, in a religious discussion (which was held at a place near Śākalā, and at who's hands he accepted Buddhism and became a convert.

We know very little about the life and teachings of the philosopher, except that recorded in *Milind Panho*, according to which Nāg Sen was the re-incarnation of Arhat Māhā Sen of Ketu-Mati Mansion, and the cycle of rebirth,[20] had been accepted by Mahāsen after repeated requests of Śukā and the personal request of Assāgutth - the Sangh Nāyak or the leader of the order, for saving the faith (Buddhism): probably after the persecution of Buddhists by Indo- Bactrian invasion, and challenges from the North West as well as from Śungā Kings (Pushya Mitra and his lineage), Kashmiri orthodox Śaivites and other aggressive Brahmanical sects around the country.

Nāgsen as per *Milind Panho* was born at Kanjaṅgle village[21] to Brahmin Sönuter after ten months of conception. Some strange things are said to have happened at the time of his birth . His father was a learned Brahmin who inspired him to learn the three Vedas which he learnt by heart and mastered them and when there was no more to learn from his father and the teacher , he became philologist and grammarian. Later he underwent Buddhist studies from Assāguttḥ and Dharmādhikāri. There were in his personality sings of great receptivity as a student. He learnt all Vedas in just one reading, mastered grammar and Lokāyat, and later all Pītkas in just seven months . From insight he saw the uselessness of Vedas indicating his preference for Buddhist thought over Brahmanic culture, or his preference for Indian way of life of non-violence, over the Āryan way of aggression and violence. He was, then admitted as a novice to the order, at the age of 20 years.

He was then asked by his Guru Rohana to go to Śākalā and overcome King Menānder in his arguments otherwise he would not be able to earn the forgiveness of his Guru. Nāgsen obeys Rohana and discussions were held in which King Menānder is defeated and he is said to have attained Arhathood.

Milind Panho : Milind Panho or the questions of Menānder, is a Buddhist canonical work, a religio-philosophical dialogue between Nāgsen and King Menānder, in almost the Platonic manner, held at a place only twelve Yojans from Kashmir.[22] *Milind Panho* was originally written in Kashmiri and subsequently translated in Pāli and Sinhalese.[23] A Chinese version of the book is also referred to.[24] Presently three critical studies with translation of the book, two in English and one in Hindi, are available.[25] However, there are some other references to the book and the philosopher in other celebrated works also.

Milind Panho contains a graphic account of how Menānder's arguments are overcome and his doubts resolved one by one, and finally he seeks refuge in Buddhist faith and becomes a disciple of the great teacher, who was a thorough going rationalist. *Milind Panho* is the best source of information on the history of Buddhism of Kashmir. It informs that Menānder built the Milind Vihāra and joined the Sanghā as a monk and finally attained Arhathood.

Milind Panho has mainly two portions or volumes. The first part or outer story mainly pertains to Nāg Sen's birth, education and preparation for the historic episode. The second portion is the final discourse between Nāgsen and the King Menānder. As the subject matter of this research is the location of the place Nāg Sen's birth and education and the place of his final discussion with Menānder, we put down in the following pages a summary of *Milind Panho's* account of Nāg Sen's birth story and his education at various places and hermitages, as translated by V.Trenecker in 1880 A.D.

Summary of Part I/or outer story of Milind Panho

"King Milinda at Sāglā, the famous town of Yore, Nāgsen the world famous sage repaired. King Milinda accompanied by 500 yonkas (mounted Greek soldiers) silences all learned men of Śākalā and for 12 years the city of Sāglā had been devoid of learned men. They had departed hither and thither and brethren of the order went for most part,to the Himālayan mountains (1/15). Milinda thought, ''all India is an empty thing. There is no recluse, Brahmin, Samana, monk or laymen left, who could dispel my doubts" (1/16).

Now at that time there dwelt on the mountaneous region of Himālayas on the guarded slopes, an innumerable company of Arhats and venerable Assāgutth. By means of divine power of hearing, Assāgutth̩ heard those words of King Milinda and convened an assembly of the order , on the submit of Yugāndhāra mountain and asked if any member of the order could face the challenge of Milinda and resolve his doubts.

Then he told the assembly about Mahāsen, east of Vejayantā palace /Ketumati mansion in the heavens of thirty three (Vedic Gods). The Arhats then vanished and reappeared at the Yugāndhāra sumit. Seeing them, Śukā went to Assāgutth̩ and after paying his respects asked him if he could do anything for the service of the order . Assāgutth̩ replies about the superiority of Milinda (king Menānder) in argument. Śukā suggests that Mahāsen of Ketumati be requested to beseech to suffer himself, to be reborn into the world of men. Śukā goes himself to Ketumati and requests Māhāsen for rebirth: When repeated requests of Śukā are not accepted by Mahāsen, Assāgutth̩ makes a personal request for saving the Buddha order and therefore Mahāsen agrees(1/18).

Then all the brethren reappeared on the guarded slopes on Himālayan mountains except Rohana, who a week before had become buried in meditation. Rohana instantly (by devine yogic powers?) appeared at the spot , and Assāgutth̩ said to Rohana that:-

"There is a Brahmin village called Kañjaṅal.[27] (Treneckner Kajjaṅgala) and there dwells a Brahmin called **Sônutur**. He will have a son called Nāg Sen. Go to that house for alms for seven years and ten months. After the laps of that time thou shall draw away the boy from the worldly life and cause him to enter the order.[28] When he shall have abandoned the world, only then shall thou be free from atonement of the fault.[29]

Mahāsen passed away and was reborn to the wife of Brahmin Sonutur. At the time of conception of Nāg Sen three strange things happened.[30]

- All the arms and weapons became ablaze.
- Tender grains became ripe.
- Great rain came.

Rohana went for alms to Brahmin Sonutur's house for seven years and received nothing; nor even a word from the Brahmins house. On that occasion he received a spoonful of rice but mostly got taunts. The Brahmin was ashamed for his earlier bad behaviour with Rohana, whom he befriended and respected later.

Nāgsen learnt all the Vedas by heart , at the inspiration of his father, and Guru and later mastered them, became philologist and grammarian (1.13/27). When there was no more to learn from his father, and teacher, he wanted to go to a place of solitude, where he could do meditation.

From insight he saw the uselessness of Vedas , indicating his preference to Buddhist thought over Brahmanic culture.[31] Rohan again came to Nāg Sen at Kañjaṅgal.

He takes him to Vattanīya's heritage, to Vijam-Vothu[32] and then to the guarded slopes, and Nāgsen is admitted as a novice into the order at the age of 20 years.

On reaching at the guarded slopes, Nāg Sen thinks low and wrong about his teacher. Rohana, who reads Nāg Sen's mind, tells him that was unwarily of a good pupil and would earn his pardon, only on going to Sāglā and overcoming King Milinda in argument (1/1/10). Rainy season was due to commence and accordingly he could not go to Śākalā. Rohan asks him to go to Vattaniya hermitage where Assāgutth the Sangh Nāyak dwelt. Nāgsen did as he was told. He swept out the teacher's cell at the Vattaniya hermitage, put the drinking water and tooth cleaner ready , which the elder Assāgutth swept again, threw away the water and tooth cleaner without saying a word. The Sangh Nāyak asked him some questions which were replied by Nāg Sen. The teacher and pupil behaved in the same manner for 6 days. On the seventh day he was again asked the same questions and same reply came, and the teacher gave him the permission to stay and pass three months at Vattanīya hermitage[33]. Now a distinguished lady follower of the faith had for 30 years administered to the wants of elder Assāgutth. At the end of the rainy season, she came one day and invited him and Nāg Sen for next day to take midday meals with her. Accordingly both of them took food at the lady's house and after doing so Assāgutth asked Nāg Sen to give thanks giving to the lady, after leaving the place himself. The lady asks Nāgsen for deeper things of the faith. Nāgsen dwelt on the profounder side of Abhidharma, relating to Arhatship, and as she sat listening, there aroused an insight in her as well in Nāg Sen's mind (like that of Arhatship). Assāgutth became aware of it at his hermitage and he said well done! Well done Nāg Sen! (1/1/11).

Assāgutth now sends Nāgsen to Pātlīputra which is 100 yojanas.[34] away, and where Dharmādhikāri dwelt in Ashoka park for learning the words of Buddha. Nāg Sen complains of greatness of distance but later agrees to go.[35]

On the way he meets a merchant with 500 wagons. After having a discourse, he is pleased with Nāg Sen and serves him well and leads him to Pātliputra.

After meeting Dharmādhikārī at Pātlīputra Nāg Sen learns by heart all the three pītkas (Baskets of Buddhist knowledge) and Buddha in recital, and in three months more, masters the deeper meaning,and at the end of that time (6 months), one day while discussing these with Dharmādhikārī attains Arhatship, a four fold power of that wisdom, and all Gods showered their approval on him.

Now, at that time, the innumerable company of Arhats at the guarded slopes in Himālayan mountains sent him a message to come, as they were anxious to see him, and when he learnt about the message, Nāgsen vanished from the Ashoka Park and reappeared before them . And they said that the King Milinda is in the habit of harassing the brethren by knotty questions and by argumentation, this way and that way. Do then Nāgsen go, and master him.

Then all the elders went to the city of Sāglā lighting it up with their yellow robes, like lamps and bringing down upon it the breeze from the height's where the sages dwelt.

At that time Āyu Pal was living at the Sānkheya hermitage well versed in three baskets and all the traditional lore. Seeing the pleasantness of the weather and inspired by it, Milinda goes to the Sānkhey hermitage , exchanges pleasantries, and in the discourses silences the elder Āyu Pāla and in excitement exclaims that "All India is an empty thing. It is very like chaff". At the same time he felt that, some other must be able to answer his questions.

At that very time Nāg Sen making his Alms tour through the villages, towns, cities, had in due course of time arrived at Sāglā, attended by a band of Samananas (Buddhist monks), at the head of a body of disciples and teacher of a school, famous and reknowned, and highly esteemed by the people, master of three Baskets and erudite in Vedic lore. He was in possession of the highest Buddhist insight and a master of all that had been handed down in the school, by which the most abstruse points could be explained. He knew by heart, the nine fold divisions of the doctrine of Buddha to the perfection. He was

i) a great orator or discussioner, unable to equal,
ii) A dispeller of darkness and diffuser of light,
iii) honoured and revered by brothers and sisters of the order.

(and similar other great praise of Nāg Sen follows on P.35 of the translation 1/1/15).

Nāg Sen dwelt at the hermitage of Sānkhey, with a numerous company of brethren, appearing in the Sānkhey grove like the lion of the hills.

Then Devmātya, councellor of Milinda, tells the King to wait for some time, as there is an elder named Nāg Sen, learned, able and wise, who could refute objections to perfection. " you should go great King to him and put your questions to him. He is able to discuss things with you and dispel your doubts". On hearing the same of Nāg Sen, the King was seized with a fear and anxiety and hairs of his stood on ends. And now Milinda asks Devmātya to send a message to Nāg Sen , that he is coming for a discussion. Nāg Sen sends word back that he might come. And he did so, attended by 500 Younkas, he reached the hermitage. There Nāg

Sen was also sitting in the central place surrounded by his followers in a Mandal Mālā. The King Milinda recognised Nāg Sen in the gathering of his followers and a feeling comes to his mind and he expresses it to Devmātya.

"Many the talkers I have, many the conversations I had had, but never yet, till now today, has fear so strange, so terrible overpowered my heart. Verily now defeat must be my lot victory his; so trouble in, my mind."

Here ends the secular introductory
narrative of the Sinhalese version,
"Bahirī Kaṭhā" or Ist part of *Milind Panho*.
(1/1/15)

As is evident from the above the Ist Vol.of *Milind Panho* pertains to a very brief sketch of Nāgsen and his confrontation with Menānder. Vol II of the book mainly concerns with philosophical discussion between the two and the details of Buddhist School of thought, and does not tell us in details about the life of Nāg Sen, his parentage , his education, his place of birth, its location and his other biographical details.

Footnotes :

1. B.K.Fidda - P.2.
2. K.T.A. - Kaul P.25-26.
3. Ibid.
4. G.B.I. c.f. Bomzai K.C.A. P.54.
5. B.K.Fidda. P.54.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. I.G. Narain P.100.
9. E.H.C.K. P. 159.
10. T.S.W. P.64; Cunnigham-Bhilśā Topes. P.311. c.f.B.K. Sarla p.42. .f.n.11. Also.

11. N.W.I. P.114, 16 .c.f Starbo, who in turn qoutes Apollodorus, the author of History of Parthiā.
12. A.I. P.325.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid. c.f. Rapson on coins of Greeko Indian Sovereigns and the Scythian and Parthian Invaders.
16. G.B.I P.133.
17. Budh. 1822 P.37 c.f. B.K. Sarla. P.42. f.n.9.
18. A.I.P. 325c.f. M.P. Treck.
19. The term JAMBŪ DVĪP and its location is being discussed separately in Annexure-I of this book.
20. Compare with the rebirth story associated with Nehru and Buddha.
21. For probable site of village Kanjaṅgle see chapter III.
22. M.P. - Treck.
23. Kashmiri Shāiri - Sāhitya Academy, New Delhi. c.f. B.K.Fidda. P.18.
24. M.P. Bhikśu -P.25-26,, Also
    F.W Cowell in his translation of Buddhist Mahāyān Text Part IInd has recorded following comments on this Chinese Edition ; No.''358; very interesting dialogue between Greek King Menānder and Bhikhu Nāgsen." The Pāli text is far more interesting and fuller than Chinese. This Chinese version has many alterations and therefore must be a composition of much later date; may be of Huen Tsäng's time. According to Jagdish Kashyap the book contains only 26 pages and is different from Pāli version of *Milind Panho* in the following:-
    I) The Purva yoga is quite different.
    II) The book in narration is only upto the 3rd chapter of the Pāli edition. However the question and answers are almost same in shape and number as in Pāli edition.
    III) In Chinese editions Nāgsen is called Zo, because at the time of his birth a calf was also born to an elephant. As the term Nag means an elephant also , he was given the name of Nāg Sen. Rohan has been described as the maternal uncle of Nāg Sen. This

Chinese version may be the product of an Indo - Chinese intercourse, as observed by R.C. Majumdar in his advanced history of India; "In the early centuries of Christain era we have an epigraphical as well as literary references to this intercourse with China, the Hellenic world, Ceylone and farther India. They are recorded in Nāgārjunkondā Inscription and the *Milind Panho*", P. 136.

The summary of the Chinese version cf, *Milind Panho* as given by Bhikśu Jagdish Kashyap is as under:-

"Lord Buddha while staying at Śrāvasti (Sy-o-a- ki)felt tired of the continued company of Bhikśūs, Nuns ,disciples and admireres day and night, and decided to live in seclusion. Accordingly he left all of them and went to a forest named (Ka-Lo-Chong-Su) and there sat under a tree for meditation. Close to this very forest there lived an elephant with 500 members of his herd. He also felt detached, deserted his herd , and came to the place where Buddha was meditating. Lord Buddha showed his affection to the animal and as a result of it the elephant rendered his service to the Lord for many days. But when Buddha left the place, the elephant was greatly pained and could not forget the Lord throughout his life, and always remembered him. In the next life this very elephant was born in a Brahmin family. On coming of age he became a recluse and resided in mountain country where another recluse was residing. Both of them became friends. One day during conversations the latter told the former that he had become a recluse only to attain Nirvāna, because the world was full of sorrow and pain, but the former told him that he had adopted this mode of life only to become a great king and conqueror in the next world. Consequently one of the recluse in the subsequent life was prince Mihan (Menānder/Milinda) born near a sea shore while the other was born in Ki-Pin_Kun (Kañjaṅgal). The child because of his predominant wish for Nirāan appeared as if he was wearing Kāśeya i.e Yellow robes. On the very day of his birth a calf was born to an elephant also and accordingly he was named Nāgsen".

As compared to the above mentioned Chinese version of the Nāgsen's rebirth story Bhikśū Jagdish Kashyap's Hindi version of the Purva Yoga or the story of the deeds of earlier life of Nāg Sen and Milind is as under:- "In Buddha's life time, a Buddhist Sangha lived in an Aśram near the Ganges. Bhikshus of this Aśram were well learnt and led a life of piousness. They would get up early in the morning and clean the hermitage, remembering always Buddha and chanting his name in prayers".

One day it so happened that one of the Bhikśu called upon a Śramaṇa to come and throw away the dirt he had collected. The Śramaṇa ignored the call of the Bhikśu and did not respond even after being called upon for the 2nd and the 3rd time. Taking the Śramanar as very discurtious, the Bhikśu became very angry and struck him with the sweeper. The Śramanar got terrified and weepingly he took out the dirt and threw it away; at the same time affirming in his mind that he would continue to perform this very deed as a duty till he attains Nirvāna, because of the merit of this deed ; and that wherever may he be reborn, he would attain the vigour and strength of the mid day sunshine. After throwing away the dirt he went to have a bath in the river Ganges and on seeing the charm of the waves, made another affirmation,that wherever he is reborn, he may attain the wisdom and intellectual superiority akin to the speed of the Ganges.

The Bhikśu after keeping the sweeper at its place, also left for the Ganges to have his bath, and while doing so overheard the solemn resolve of the Śamaṇa. He thought that if Śramer, on being inspired by my beating of him, can have, such a hard affirmation, why should'nt I also do so. Accordingly, he also had a resolve made in his mind, "where ever am I reborn, I may attain the superiority of wisdom like the waves of the Ganges and may be able to answer all the questions and doubts raised by this Śramana. Both of them spent one Budhānter (a period of time) by being reborn in the world of Devās (Gods) and human beings (Manushya). Then our Lord Buddha also saw them there and ushered a prophecy regarding the two, just similar to the one he had made about Mogli's son named Tiśya. "After five hundred years of my salvation (Mahānirvān) both of them will be reborn and will propagate the religion I had founded, and will remove all doubts and confusion with respect to the faith by putting questions, giving answers, with similies and examples.

Among the two, the Śramner was later born as the King of the city of Sāgla in Jambū Dvīp and the Bhikśu as Nāgsen

25. Please see bibliography.
26. B.K.Fidda. P.25.
27. A famous place in Buddhist story. It is at the extreme limit to the east of Buddhist Holy land, middle country, at the foot of Himālyan mountains. For the village see Chapter III of the book .
28. Indicates his conversion to Buddhist faith from Brahmanic fold at the hands of Rohan the Arhat and Śramana.
29. For having left the place of hermitage a week before and got himself burried all alone in meditation, and reaching late at the assembly of the order.
30. M.P.Treck. The fact that Brahmin Saonutur, father of Nāgsen, taught three Vedas to Nāgsen again points out to the probability that the highland valleys of Chinab were the lands of Vedic seers and sages.
31. Or his preference for his native Indian thought of non-violence over the aggressive Āryan thought and culture of violence.
32. For identification of Vijamvothu see places, persons and terms in M.P. Chapter III.
33. M.P. Treck. P.30.
34. Ibid - Yojan = League of seven miles.
35. Ibid - P. 33-34.

CHAPTER II

IDENTIFICATIONS

1. GREEKO - BACTRIAN KINGS AND MENĀNDER

As indicated earlier, in the interregum, between Maurya and Kuśāṇa periods North West India once again passed under the sway of foreigners, including Indo-Greek.[1]

Bacteria and Parthiā, the two states that greatly influenced the history of North West India, threw off the Seleucid Yoke of Antiochus III, about the middle of third century B.C. and established themselves as independent states. Antiochus III was the Seleucid Satrap of Syria. He had , in the initial stages curbed the expansionist ambitions of Euthydemids, the rulers of Bactria, but he himself got involved on his Western frontiers, leaving Euthydemus the King of Bactria (220-192 B.C.) free to extend his kingdom in such directions as were open to him, without inviting a fresh attack by the Selucid Antiochus. After the death of Antiochus around 206 B.C., he was completely independent and carried on extension of his territory freely and fearlessly. By 190.B.C. the power of Antiochus regime had been broken[2] and Euthydemus had also died and his son Demitrius had started to extend his powers south of Hindu Kuś and accordingly he invaded India.

Demitrius, who finds mention in the Indian classics is said to have carried two invasion of India

.The first during the life time of his father i.e. Euthydemus, before 190 B.C. During the life time of his father, Arācosiā, Sindhu, Sauvirā and probably Gandhāra were added to Euthydemus Kingdom, and consolidated his rule in these parts. He probably advanced in Panjāb also, as far as the ancient city of Śākalā (modern Siālkot) and renamed if after the name of his father as Euthydemia.[3] But as the name never came in vogue, the occupation of Śākalā by Demitrius must have been of short duration.

If Demitrius had left any Garrisons in Panjāb then they were soon expelled by the Mauryan ruler of Panjāb and Kashmir. King Jālukā of Kashmir, who is said to have been a contemporary of Demitrius, freed the country from an invasion as far as Kanauj.[4] The Malechās most probably were the IndoGreek Garrisons left behind by Demitrius at Śākalā and Gandhāra after his first attack of India. However Demitrus had acquainted himself, with the type of resistance he was to face in his second assault of North India, which he had now planned.

Around 190 B.C. Demitrius commenced his second raid into India.Though he had earlier been repelled from southern Kashmir and Panjāb, he still held the country of Arācosiā, Gandhāra, Sindhu and Sauvīrā. He consolidated his rule in these parts. Around this time he is said to have founded two cities both named after him as Demitriās.

Demitrius seems to have conducted his 2nd raid on India in two phase and with two pincers. In the 1st phase, he seems to have occupied Afghānistān, Sindh and Takśilā. Apollodotus his brother [6] and General was appointed as his Sub-King to govern these regions and also to assist him in his second compaign of invading

North India. He mainly exerted to improve and overhaul the Greek war machine.

In the second phase, around 186 B.C.[7] he dreamt of conquering the whole of North India and led a two pronged attack on Sāketa, Vidiśā and Pātlīputra, the strongholds of, otherwise, shattering and decaying Mauryan empire. He penetrated through Pānipat gap into the Gangetic valley and laid siege to the city of Sāketā in Kośāla. Śungā Chief who had overthrown the weak Mauryan ruler Bridhāratha and seized power himself, gave him a tough resistance and Sāketa could not be subdued, but the temptation to capture reknowned city of Pātlipura proved irresistible and Demitrius by-passed Sāketa thereby committing a fatal blunder. When he reached the mud walls of Pātliputra, Pushyamitra, who after the assassination of Bridhārtha was in full control of his forces, threatened his rear by attacking the base of Demitrius forces at Mathurā. This lead to his disastrous retreat in the Napoleonic way. The Hathigumphā inscription probably refers to this retreat.[8]

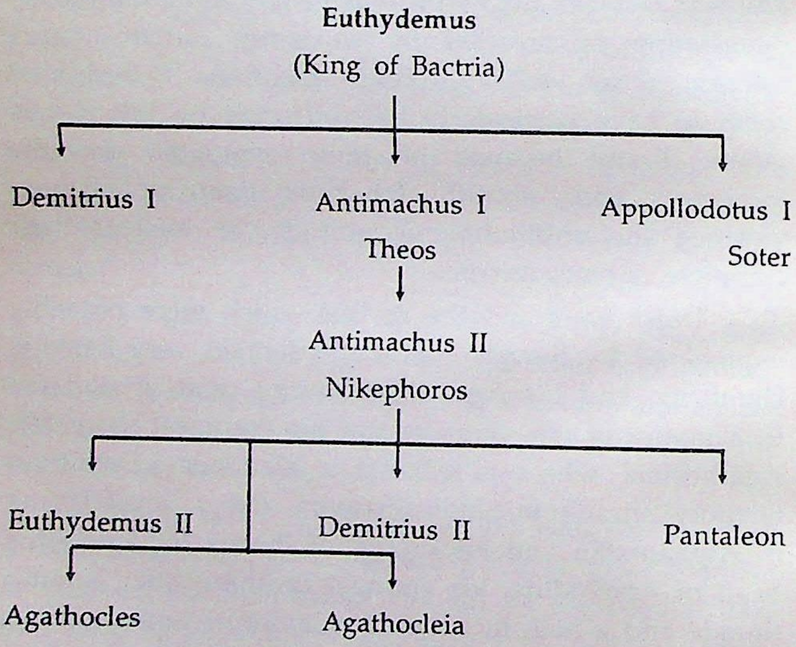
It is quite probable that around this very time Menānder as a baby King, or hostage from Apollodotus, had been stationed by Demitrius at Mathurā, along with his mother, as Strabo mentions him as one of the Generals of Demitrius.

Another pincer or attack on the Mauryan territory of North India, aimed at capturing Sāketā and Pātliputra as planned by Demitrius, was led by his brother and Sub King Apollodotus which advanced towards Vidiśā, the ancestral Kingdom of Śungas. This was meant to link with Demitrius in the Gangetic valley, but Apollodotus found his way blocked by the fortified town of Madhyamikā. He laid a seige of the town, but could neither reduce it, nor by-pass it to link up with

Demitrius at Mathurā or Sāketa. The result was a complete failure of the planned expedition. In subsquent years Demitrius seems to have lost one battle after the other. The fierce fight between Pushyamitra alongwith his sons Agnimitra and grand-son Vasumitra on one side and Demitrius and his allies and successors (Euthedemus II, Demitrius II Pantalean, Agathocles, Apollodotus and Menānder) on the other side seems to have continued for quite a long time (probably from 186 B.C. to 150 B.C.) during which the Euthydemus family seems to have lost the whole territory of North West India except, Sindh- Sauvīra, where Apollodotus was allowed to rule under the suzerainty of Śungas. The war between the two was fiercely fought and greatly devastating as revealed by so many Indian literary references[9] as well as foreign mentions.[10] Buddhists seem to have particularly been effected by this devastation, firstly because of their sympathy for the foreigners and secondly for their doctrine of non-violence and antiBrahmanic attitude, as well as their complete submissiveness.

These wars and the revolts which were probably engineered by Śungās cost Euthydemids very heavily. Demitrius and his compelete lineage, was annihilated in a matter of few years except his youngest daughter. Agathocleia, who was married to Menānder. Demitrian territory shrank to Sindhu-Sauvīra and a small chunk in Afghānistān and his crown of thorns fell upon the head of Apolloduts, his younger brother. After about a decade and a half, in which Apollodotus seems to have accepted the suzerainty of Śungas, concluded temporary peace to the advantage of both, and later became aggressive and arrogant. He too seems to have fallen at the hands of youthful Śunga Vasumitra[11] around 158 B.C. Pushyamitra (185 B.C to 149B.C.) steadily advanced towards the North West India through Panjāb. Tārānath speaks of his rule in Jullunder.[12] Divyāvdān[13] records his advance from Pātlīputra to Śākalā and thence to Koshthakā (i.e.Kahūtā near Rāwalpīndi) and thence to Takśilā[14], where he probably met Eukradites and conspired and engineered a revolt against Demitrius and Apollodotus.[15] The revolt might have been raised by other Satraps of Demitrius,and accordingly he was killed either by Pushyamitra Śungā who continuously persued him, or by one of his own probable revolting Satraps or Chiefs.

The Geneaology of Euthydemus family as compiled by Tarn[16] is as under:—


Euthydemus
(King of Bactria)
Demitrius I
Antimachus I
Theos
Appollodotus I
Soter
Antimachus II
Nikephoros
Euthydemus II
Demitrius II
Pantaleon
Agathocles
Agathocleia

MENĀNDER

From the above genealogical table as compiled by Tarn, on the conclusions of Dr.Macdonald, Menānder does not figure in the family of Euthydemus - Demitrian lineage. Doubts have been expressed about his antecedents. However recent researches indicate that he was the son and successor of Apollodotus and nephew of Demitrius.[17] He was probably the only survivor left to represent the house of Euthydemids who had been associated with the Greek invasion of India, right from very early age, as depicted by his baby King coins[18], and was the only Indo-Greek kings of India to find a favourable mention in the Indian literature. He is celebrated as a great Buddhist king and finds mention in Indian classics also.[19]

Time and place of birth:

In Milind Panho while answering questions of Nāgsen Menānder has himself mentioned his place of birth as Alsandā.[20]

अत्थि भन्ते अलसन्दो नाम दीपो ।३४ ।

तत्था हं जातो ति..........

अत्थि भन्ते कलसि गाम नाम ।३४ ।

तत्था हं जातो ति............

Regarding Alsandā and Kalsigām, scholars have given various suggestions. Dr.D.C.Sircar[21] and Prof. Rapson[22] have identified the Dvīpa of Alsandā of *Milind Panho* as Doāb lying between Panjshir (five heads) and Kābul rivers. According to him this very Dvīp of Alsandā of Yavnās is mentioned in Mahāvaṁśa (XXIX.39). He asserts that there is no reason why the term Alsandā should not be applied to the country between Panshir and Kābul rivers, in which the ruins of (one of many) Alaxandriās (City of Alexander) have now been recognised near Chrikar. King Menānder himself describes it[23] 200 yojnas or 500 miles away from Śākalā and according to Rapson the distance between Siālkot and Charikar fairly agrees well with Menānder's statement. Rhy Davids however feels that Alsandā Dvīp was a name given to an island presumably in Indus. No identification of Kālsī village is forthcoming. Scholars however agree, whatever their difference of opinion, that this Alsandā or Alexandriā was south of Paropamisus (Hindu kuś). To me it appears that the Dvīp of Alsandā must be located somewhere in the North West India lying between river Sindh and one of its tributaries, most probably Kābul river in analogus to Sapt Dvīpas of ancient India. The Greeko-Arab prefix "A1" joins the river name to make it Alsandhā and the village Kālsī must be located lying somewhere between the two rivers and adjacent to river Sind which at present is a difficult task for an Indian of meagre resources like me to locate in the context of difficult situation of the region (Pakistān-Afghānistān). As for the time of Menānders birth is concerned, we know that Euthydemus started his attack on North West India around 190 B.C. and occupied parts of Afghānistan, particularly the Kābul Valley, (Dvīp of Alsandā), for a short spell of time only, i.e. around 190-189 B.C. The next few years were wasted in subduing the revolts of Aśvakās and consolidating his rule in Arācosiā, Sindhu and Sauvīr . So it must be during this short period of peaceful occupation of Alsandā between 190 B.C.-189 B.C.- that Menānder must have been born.[25] Around this very time Apollodotus started his career as Sub-King of Kapīśā Gandhāra.[26] This date agrees well with Menānder's early coins. In which the bust of the King is that of a boy in his teens. In 174 B.C. when his father Apollodotus succeeded Demetrius, he must have been of 16 years and was appointed as SubKing, by his father. He received the Diadem in the life time of his father.

Apollodotus, the father of Menānder seems to have been killed in action by Vasumitra about 160 B.C. By that time Menānder must have gained considerable administrative experience. He must have been of some 30 years at the time. As his early coins have been found from Sindh and Western parts of Afghānistān, it can be inferred that these parts he inherited from his father and were not as yet penetrated either by Pushya Mitra Śuṅga or his ally and also by pretender Eukradites. It is around this time that he recruited his new sturdy soldiers, from Lohitrādri i.e. (Hindu Kuś), well versed in the art of war, which resulted in fierce battles and death of Agnimitra.

Marriage of Menānder

As seen earlier, with the death of Demitrius and his sons, his direct line, but for a daughter became extinct. The legal title to the Euthydemid's throne came to Apollodotus, the seniormost living representative of that family. When the later was raised to the throne in natural course, and Agāthocleia the youngest child of Demitrius, which seems to be a very pretty girl and cousin sister of Menānder, married him. Vishisht Dev Mohan[27] assumes that Meṇānder had married the youngest child of Demitrius i.e. Queen Agāthocleia, on the following grounds:-

1) Queen Agathocleia and his sons Starto I immediately succeeded to the throne of Menānder as rulers of Panjāb with their capital at Śākalā.

II) Again the bust of Queen Athena Helmeted which appears on the coins of Menānder[28] is perhaps a portrait of Agathocleia. It resembles her own coins struck in association with Strato I.[29] Her husband Menānder, perhaps for reasons of her beauty or love and reverence for her, considered her appearance as God like, and this idea of self praise of Agathocleia must be at the back of her assumption of Theotropos i.e. God like, as her title on the currency during her regency of Strato I.

(III) The figure of a warrior King on the reverse of certain coins struck by Agathocleia during Strato's minority and bearing her own portrait, may be supposed to represent the late King.[30]

A similar figure occurs on the obverse type of coins of Menānder -[31] where it is most naturally explained as that of Menānder.[32]

Career of Menānder :

Menānder's career has been portrayed by various authors in diverse shades, as a king and monarch, as a politician, as a warrior, as a religious philosopher and as an administrator. He had been a man of extraordinary intelligence, and capabilities.

Warrior Menānder :

According to Tarn Menānder was a commoner and had risen to Demitrius generalship by dint of his ability. He carved his own way to fortune before marrying into the royal house.[33] But he has expressed his doubts also.[34] According to him, "It was one thing for Demitrius to confer the royal title and a great measure of power upon Apollodotus who was his brother and kinsmen, and quite another to confer that title upon a General Menānder". But he ventures to suggest that, "It may have been done because of some sheer necessity", when "Demitrius himself returned to fight Eukradites". Probably Tarn did not believe or knew about any relationship between Menānder and Apollodotus and hence the confusion. If we take into consideration the deduction of Vishisht Dev,[35] that Menānder was the son of Apollodotus and the title of sub-kingship was conferred on him by Apollodotus and not by Demitrius, things become somewhat clear, but Menānder's participation as a General in the attack of Sāketa by Demitrius around 185 B.C. still needs to be explained.

According to Vishishit Dev[36], quoting Strabo and Patanjalī[37] the two pincer, 2nd attack of Demitrius on Sāketa and Madhyamikā (Vidiśā), was conducted by his above referred two Generals around 185 B.C. when Menānder was very young and of tender age, and could not participate in the terrible war. (Plate xxv) But his participation is not very difficult to explain.

Actually during the year 190 B.C. to 185 B.C., when the second phase of Demitrius attack on India was undertaken, his other sons had either been killed in the revolts of newly acquired regions or appointed as sub-kings in his parent domain of Bactria. Euthydemus IInd died after a brief reign, Panteleon was killed in the revolt, Demitrius II, his own name Sake was transferred to Bactria, the parent Kingdom, and Agathocles the youngest son was appointed as sub-king of Puśkalāvatī and Kāpiśi. He must have been left with Apollodotus only, his brother, whom he entrusted with the 2nd pincer advance towards Sāketa through Madhyamikā (Vidiśā of Pāṇiṅī, while he himself advanced through Pānīpat gap to Mathurā and Sāketa, and laid the seige of the city. He took alongwith him Menānder, as a baby general; probably it would have been unsafe to leave him alone at Gandhāra, where his own son had already been killed and secondly, probably he thought he could use him as a hostage and secure the fidelity of Apollodotus for a quick advance towards Sāketa after reducing Vidiśā. Again the participation of very young princes in the battle field, for educating them for the future responsibilities, can be noticed in many cases of Indian history right from the earliest times to the recent days. The busts on some Indo-Greek coins depicts young princes alongwith some wild animals like cub, elephant, bull, thereby indicating their spirits of adventure. Apollodous tried hard to reach Sāketa and join Demitrius but could not do so; and when Demitrius, after laying the seige of Sāketa, by-passed it and advanced towards Pātlīputra, Menānder must have been stationed, by him at Mathurā only as a titular general, which resulted in the mention of Menānder by Strabo, Garg,[38] and Patanjali as attacking Mathurā, only as a Demitrius war propaganda campaign. Again, as the war between Demitrius forces and Śuṅgas continued till the death of Demitrius in 175 B.C., and as Demitrius returned to fight Eukradites in Bactria, during the very period of his Indian compaigns, it must have been only Apollodotus and his very young son Menānder, who had to face the brunt of these 'Śuṅga attacks, and fierceness of the wars with them. These wars between Pushyamitra, Vasumitra and Agnimitra on one side and Demitrius, Apollodotus and Menānder on the other side, raged till Agnimitra Śuṅga death at the hands of Menānder forces around 140 B.C. Menānder thus emerged as a hero of a great and persistent was between Śuṅgās and Indo-Greek rulers. And it must be some of these wars that find mention in contemporary Indian classical literature (Pāṇiṅī-*Garg Saṁhitā, Māhābhārtā, Malvikāginīmitram*). These wars seem to have influenced many Indian classical writers in portraying their characters, by giving accounts of some of these wars in their literary works.

Territory of Menānder :

There have been many misconceptions about Menānder's actual empire. Tarn has given a greatly exaggerated account of his domains. According to him every place where any Greek coins are found or Greek presence is overheard, fell within Menānder's domain.[39] However, it is certain that after his assumption of sovereignty around 158 B.C., over whatever was left after shrinking of the Demitrain India, he slowly and steadily increased his territory from Arācosiā in the North West frontier India to the bank of River Rāvī in East Panjāb. Sauvīra or Sindhu region seems to have been continued to be his ancestral province alongwith all country around Sindh Sāgar Doāb. He in the life time of Apollodotus seems to have reoccupied Arācosiā and Kāpiśī. The conquest of Afghānistan may too have been an honour shared by his father also. He recruited war like soldiers from this region. It is around this time that he subdued the Śuṅga remanent King of Swāt valley (named Vijāyaka Mitra) and appointed him as Sub-King under him. The discovery of steatite casket at Shinkot in Bajaur tribal territory of Swāt, with two kharośtī inscriptions and some 200 Dracham and 721 of his coins in mint condition from the same valley[40] proves this fact. Menānder has been mentioned there as "Mahārājā Menānder" which indicates that some Śuṅga prince acted as a sub-king or Indian Satrap of that country under the Greeks, and that the Śuṅga domination of North West India had started to show a decline now. Menānder's domain possibly included some areas of North of Hindu Kuś as Plutarch called him King of Bactria.[41] He now pressed ahead South-East-wards, and occupied other regions in West Panjāb. Literary evidence from Plutarch, Apollodorus (quoted by Tarn) and *Milind Panho* and the numismatic evidence and data collected by researchers; indicates that his empire included Kapiśa, Gandhārā, Kābul, Ghaznī, ancient Puśkalāvatī or present Charsaddā Peshāwar, Taxilā, Rawalpindi (all places now in Pakistān or Afgānistān) and Swāt Valley. Annexation of Śāklā and better parts of Punjab seem to be late events of his reign. Paucity of his coins in these regions, especially in Śākalā point to this fact. The death of Agnimitra around 140 B.C. gave Menānder an opportunity to reestablish his family in Western Panjāb. Menānder took advantage by attacking the new inexperienced Śuṅga King. After a bloody battle Menānder seems to have occupied Śākalā. It is possibly this battle which finds mention in *Garg Saṁitā*,[42] fought fiercely by the soldiers from Hindu Kuś.

लौहिताद्रेस्तथा जौधैर्योधा युद्ध परिक्षताः ।
करिष्यन्ति पृथिवीं शून्या रक्त घोरां सुदारुणाम् ॥

The next few lines speak of resultant weakening of Agnimitra's successors which implies the loss of Śuṅga territory to Menānder around this very time.

The war may have been fought even during Agnimitra's time. It must be remembered that occupation of Śāklā by Menānder and his conversion to Buddhism are to be related closely one after the other.[43]

Recent discoveries have brought to light few of his coins from Western U.P. and Southern Kashmir also.

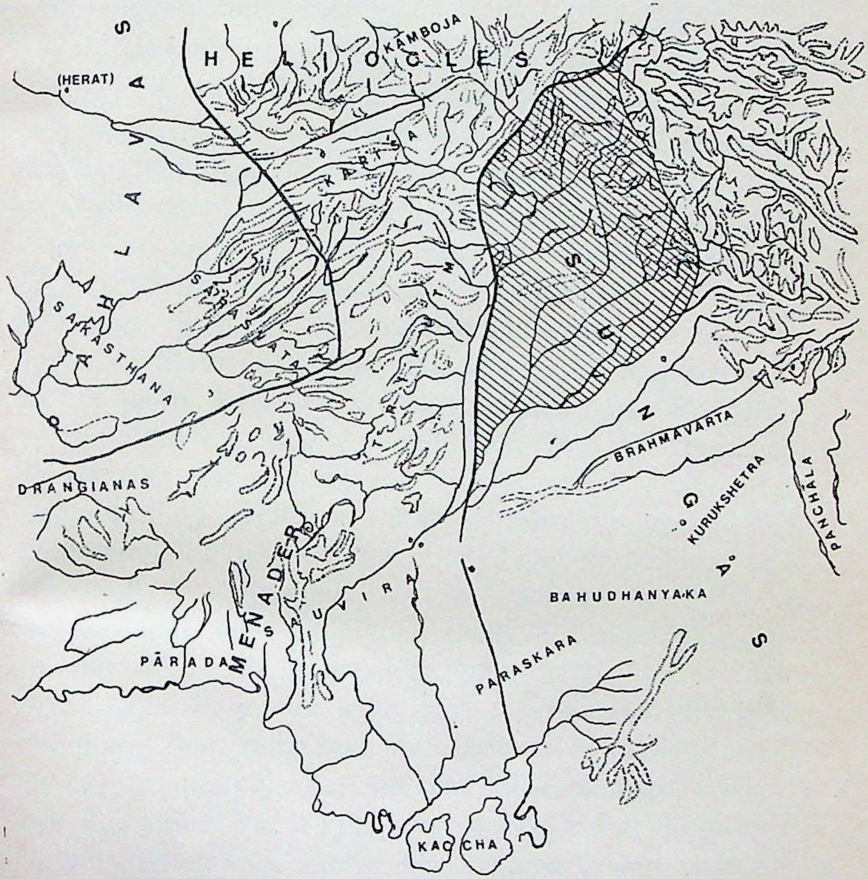
Thus Menānder ruled over an extensive empire, stretching from Hindu Kuś in the North West to North of Rāvī river in the east, whole of Sindh in the West, spread to the North East including some parts of Kashmir also. (See Map Sketch No.2).

Social aspect of Menānder's rule :

In *Milind Panho* we see Menānder possessing qualities of great oration, deep learning and intelligence, tactful handling of things decisively, even in matters related with contemporary social and religious giants. He must have possessed these qualities from the very childhood which raised him in the eyes of Demitrius, who saw in him the probability of a rising Greek General, and resulted subsequently in his appointment as a SubKing. Demitrius may have even thought, in his life time, of marrying his youngest daughter

MAP SKETCH NO---2 NORTH WEST INDIA (150 - 137 BC)

Empires Of Sungās & Menader


KAMBOJA
HELIOCLES
(HERAT)
PAHLAVAS
KAPISA
SAKASTHANA
DRANGIANAS
MENADER
SAUVIRA
PĀRADA
PARASKARA
BAHUDHANYAKA
BRAHMAVARTA
KURUKSHETRA
PANCHALA
SUNGAS
KACCHA

▨ ADDITIONAL ACQUISITION OF MENĀDER CIRCA - 140 - BC

COURTSY :-

1. NATIONAL ATLAS OF INDIA–1957
2. N.W.I. P. 216.

Agathocleia to this promising young boy, who was her cousin. His social character and qualities of his person may have been the root cause for endearing him in his gallant army, Indian appreciators and foreign historians and admirers.

Menānder's conversion :

The impression that a reader gains from *Milind Panho* is that it is a mixture of fact and fiction. However, the fact of Menānder's conversion to Buddhism cannot be doubted from the numerous literary evidences from diverse sources, and from the archeological evidence as stated in the forthcoming chapter of the present work. His conversion to Buddhism was known to Plutarch who had recorded~~[44]~~ and recounted to the world , how after his death his ashes were devided among the cities of his realm, each one of which raised a stūpa (Uvnuela) over its portion, which reveals that his conversion was known far and wide to the ancient world. The doubts expressed by Tarn[44] and R.D Vādekar[45] regarding the correctness of certain portion of *Milind Panho* story and levelling of allegations that its subject- matter is in keeping with the Buddhist tradition of distorting history to suit the ends of religious propaganda,[46] does not seem to be based on facts. The assertion of Tarn that conqueror does not adopt the religion and nomenclature of the conquered, may be true to Europe or Middle East countries, but it is against the basic fact of ancient Indian history and culture, and persistent long tradition of this land, full of righteous and spiritualistic forces under which most of the foreign invaders adopted Indian way of life and religious thinking. It is under these influences that we find the Besnagar inscription of Helidoras, who proclaims his Bhāgvat Dharma, and the inscriptions found in the caves of Nasik, Junnār and Kālrā recording religious gifts donated by Yavana

(Greek) Kings who bear Indian names.[47] The ancient Greek population in India is absorbed in the Indian social and religious fabric, so much so, that today we see no trace of their separate identity. Menānder's conversion to Buddhism, as evident from Milind Panho seems to be a sincere one, and the identity of the place names in *Milind Panho* and their surface location in the Himālayan Valleys of Kashmir i.e. Poonch and Kaśṭwāṛ along with location of Archeological sites confirms the fact beyond any shadow of doubts. Menānder is the only Greek monarch widely loved and appreciated in Indian literature.

Later Years of Menānder

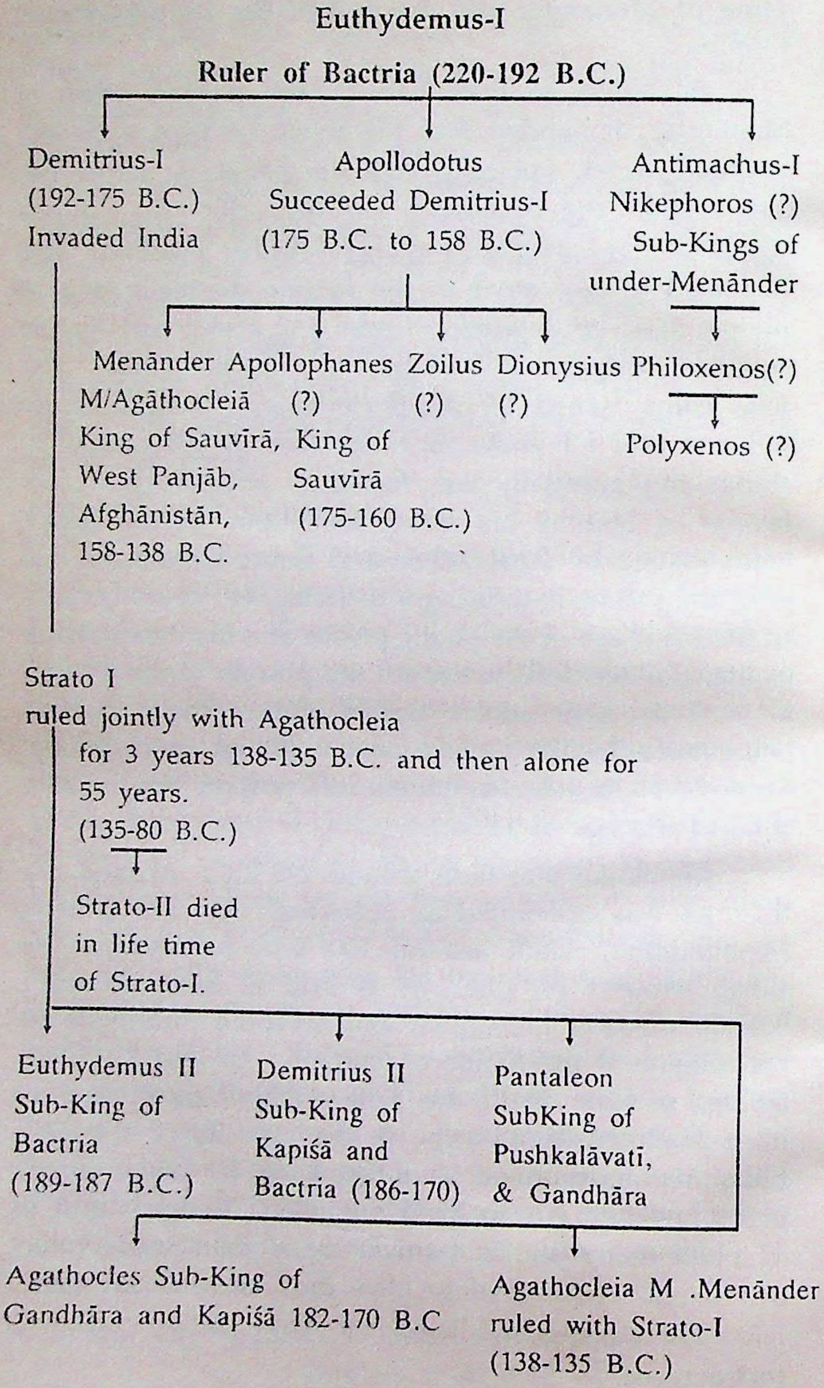
Not much is known about Menānder's later life. According to Milind Panho's second part Menānder handed over his Kingdom to his son (Strato I), retired from the worldly affairs, became a Bhikśu and attained Arhathood. But according to Tarn this description in *Milind Panho* is only a transfer to him of the story that Aśokā, late in his life, became an Arhat, and certain preliminaries to the meeting of Menānder and Nāg Sen as depicted in *Milind Panho* are supposed to have been taken from story of meeting of Aśokā with Tissā Moggliputtra. However it is felt that Menānder did not rule for many years after his occupation of Śākalā and conversion to Buddhism. He moved his capital to Śākalā but none of his coins have been unearthed from this famous city. According to Plutarch "he died in a camp" may be in the course of an observational pincer across Satluj or Beās upto Yamunā, or may have fallen a prey to the NonBuddhist agressive remnants of Śuṅgā rulers, or Punjab Tribal belt of Kangra or Audumbaras.

Time of Menānder and the end of the Indo-Bactrian-Empire :

According to Prof. Lāhirī, "the sudden death of Menānder demanded that the news be kept a closely quarded secret, not only from the people at large, but also from the external enemies, till the queen (Agathocleia) was able to consolidate her position. She had also to take stock of the natural dis-inclination of people to accept a woman's rule, and also guard against possible intrigues to oust her or even her child. The four coins issued by Agathocelia and Strato-I jointly indicate that for some time she was in full control of things but gradually was forced to abdicate power in favour of Strato-I his minor son[48] one of the Jugate coins issued by Agathocleia and Strato-I indicates that only the prince is wearing a diadem. However because of the teen- age of the young prince and his inexperience of life, the decisions to reduce the powers of the Queen, as well as other administrative officers seem to have been taken by the Greek court, with an India Lobby. Strato-I might have assumed full powers around 135 B.C. at the age of 15 years.

Menānder was born around 190 B.C. Around 175 B.C. he was appointed as Sub-King. On his father's (Apollodotus) death around 160 B.C. he became the King. Around 140 B.C. he is said to have occupied Śākalā, made it his capital and accepted Buddhism as his religion at the hands of Nāgsen. Around 138 B.C., on his sudden death, his wife Agathocleia is said to have assumed his powers, in the capacity of a queen. Thus Menānder ruled as a Sub-King for some fifteen years and as a sovereign for another 20 years; and in 52 years of his life he seems to have ruled for 35 years in all. He is believed to have died around 138 B.C.

The Geneological table of Euthydemus family as restructured by M.V.D. is as under :



Euthydemus-I

Ruler of Bactria (220-192 B.C.)

Demitrius-I
(192-175 B.C.)
Invaded India

Apollodotus
Succeeded Demitrius-I
(175 B.C. to 158 B.C.)

Antimachus-I
Nikephoros (?)
Sub-Kings of
under-Menānder

Menānder
M/Agāthocleiā
King of Sauvīrā,
West Panjāb,
Afghānistān,
158-138 B.C.

Apollophanes
(?)
King of
Sauvīrā
(175-160 B.C.)

Zoilus
(?)

Dionysius
(?)

Philoxenos(?)

Polyxenos (?)

Strato I
ruled jointly with Agathocleia
for 3 years 138-135 B.C. and then alone for
55 years.
(135-80 B.C.)

Strato-II died
in life time
of Strato-I.

Euthydemus II
Sub-King of
Bactria
(189-187 B.C.)

Demitrius II
Sub-King of
Kapiśā and
Bactria (186-170)

Pantaleon
SubKing of
Pushkalāvatī,
& Gandhāra

Agathocles Sub-King of
Gandhāra and Kapiśā 182-170 B.C

Agathocleia M .Menānder
ruled with Strato-I
(138-135 B.C.)

After Menander his son Strabo I assumed full powers and ruled parts of Panjāb with his capital at Śākalā, till 80 B.C. By this time Śākās led by their King Maues had spread all over the region previously held by the Indo-Bactrian Greeks.[49]

Time of writing of Milind Panho :

A

We see that in the very start of the celebrated work the discription of the grandeur of Śākalā starts with the words-"Sāglā of Yore" i.e. long ago, which indicates that the work *Milind Panhö* must have been written much after Ist century B.C. According to D.C. Sircar[50] it was probably written in early centuries of Christian era" but surely before 400 A.D. when Buddh Ghosh referred it in his writings.[51]

Author of the work Milind Panhö :

Milind Panhö, the religious discourse between King Menānder and Nāgsen is written in the true Indian tradition of ignoring self in all writings, and nothing is known about the author of this book.

B

Nāg Sen being acknowledged as a great Buddhist saint, scholar and philosopher, won acclaim in the whole Buddhist world and his name and fame travelled to far off places including China and Cylone, as their versions of *Milind Panhö* are also available. Buddhism flourished in Cylone and China from where two famous travellers Huentsang (631 A.D.) and O'Kāng (759 A.D.) came to India in pursuit of Buddhist knowledge through the ancient silk route passing through Kashmir. Nāg Sen is remembered in these countries also.

In the introductory of V. Trenekner's translation of *Milind Panhö* the author opines that the writer of questions of Milinda resided in the far North West India or Panjāb itself, and this is confirmed by the great improbability of any memory of Menānder having survived elsewhere and more especially in Cylone, where we should naturally look for our author's residence, if he did not live in the region thus suggested.[52]

Various historians, including those from Kashmir have[53] also suggested the possibility of *Milind Panhö* being basically a work in Kashmiri and later being translated into Pālī and other Indian and foreign languages. Fiddā Hussain also believes it to be a Kashmiri work.

To me it appears certain that, on the basis of the names of rivers, places and persons, that occur in *Milind Panhö* and their nearness to the Kashmir, the celebrated work must have originally been written by a Kashmiri, Kaśṭwāṛī or any outsider disciple of Nāg Sen, may be one even from Pātlīputra or Cylone at Vattaniya hermitage, in Kaśtwāṛ or Sānkhey hermitage at Sakhī Maidān or Rāmkund in Mendhar (Poonch), which the Chinese pilgrim Huentsang did not visit, as it may have been in ruins by then, but which was much celebrated for its miracles as pointed by him.

Milind Panhö's account of persecution of Buddhists :

The story of Buddhist persecution as satated in *Milind Panhö* is not without base but needs some modifications. In *Milind Panhö* it is recorded "King Milinda accompanied by 500 Yonkās silenced all learned men of Śākalā and for 12 years the city of Sāglā had been devoid of learned men.

They had departed hither and thither, and brethren of the order, went for most part, to the Himālayan mountains.[54] Here the allegation of persecution of Buddhists is levelled against Menānder which, in the light of his popularity amongst the people of his realm and his favourable mention in the Indian literautre does not seem true. Factually, around this time, Buddhist, belonging as they were to the lower class of society, were persecuted both by Indian rulers and foreign invaders. Among the foreign invaders of the time, it had been Euthydemus, Demitrius and Apollodotus, the predecessors and compatriots of Menānder who ruthlessly killed the Indian population and from who's barbarity even women and children were not spared.[55]

It is clear from the Indian accounts that cruelity and tyrany of Demitrius had earned him a considerable hatred and bitterness of the Indian people. Purāṇas (depicting Brahmanic thought) describe Greeks/as irreligious and barbarous. *Garg Saṁhitā* also paints them in the same colour.[56]

This must have happened before 160 B.C. around which time Menānder assumed sovereign kingship. Śuṅgās and rulers of Kashmir also persecuted them. King Jalukā of Kashmir is said to have been a Śaivite and he also persecuted Buddhists. The Śuṅgā hero, who fought severe battles against the Indo-Greek rulers, is said to have been a sworn enemy of Buddhists. It appears that Buddhists had some sort of sympathy for the Indo- Greeks, and their sympathy had been all along with the Mauryās also.

Euthydemids house seems to have found a natural ally in Buddhist sections of Indian population. Pushyamitra is said to have persued fleeing Greeks in the North West India between 185 to 175 B.C. He was a Bhārdwāj Brahmin and Buddhist could not look upon a Brahman ruler of Pātlīputra with equanimity. They must have been ready to transfer their loyalities to anybody who could challenge the Śuṅgās.

It was therefore natural for an Indian prince engaged in the defence of the country to punish those who betrayed it to the foreigner. If the charge of persecution of Buddhists is levelled against Śuṅga King, especially Pushyamitra[57] (186-149 B.C.) also, it was no wonder, as the defence of the country against invading Indo-Greeks lay on him in the succeeding years. Pushyamitra is stated to have persued the Greeks throuhg Jullunder,Śākalā and right upto Indus,[58] destorying Stūpas, burning monastries and killing monks, as far as Sākalā.[59] At Sākalā Pushyamitra issued a declaration that whosoever would present him a head of a Śramaṇa would be rewarded with one hundred Dinārs.[60] This was so because Śākalā has been described in *Milind Panhö* as a resort of Buddhist monks. Thus the story of Buddhist persecution around 185-140 B.C. in North West India is correct, but *Milind Panhö's* allegations solely against King Menānder is not wholly correct. Prof. N.N. Ghosh feels that Buddhists account regarding their persecution by Pushyamitra is a correct one.[61] However being interested in Indian philosophy and relgion, Menānder may have perscuted them intellectually, by humiliating them in public discussions as recorded in *Milind Panhö*. As Menānder was the most talked about monarch of this time, the persecution, charges may have been levelled against him only, as sketched in *Milind Panhö*, with the sole aim of proving superiority of Buddhist religion and thought over all other contemporary relgions, and faiths.

Fierceness of Indo-Greek Wars :

The wars that followed the Ist and second invasion of Demitrius on India and the resultant prolonged battles between the two, were of severe nature and resulted in many unfortunate clamities for the local population. *Gargsaṁhitā* indicates a long period of strife, between the Greeks and Indians and then among the Greeks themselves.[62] Sungās too having been weakened in wars against Greeks, who's armies were largely manned by soldiers from Hindu Kuś were not allowed to rule in peace by them. All the same they are described as powerful kings.[63] In these wars men died in such large numbers as led to the predominance of women in the country's population. Men became so scarce that women had to man almost all professions from cultivation and business to that of soldiers. Men took ten or even twenty wives.[64] This long period of strife culminated in a horrible famine.[65] The Tax Collector of Demitrius having grown in number fearlessly devoured the people, since there was no authority left to bring them to book.[66]

Under such circumstances it was not only the Buddhist monks and priest of *Milind Panhö*, that fled from Śākalā region and the plains of Punjāb, but other section of populations also, who sought refuge in the Himālayan valleys.

Nāg Sen :

About Nāg Sen not much is known except what is written in *Milind Panhö*, which is primarily connected with his philosophical discussion with King Menānder. All subsequent comments about him by various authors are based on this work. However *Milind Panhö* does not furnish us the desired details of his place of birth, time of his discussions with King Menānder and other details about the celebrated work. However, one can assume that he was born in Kāṇiṅī Ajāl area of Kaśṭwāṛ, was educated in the Nāgsenī area of the same region, and undertook his deep meditation there. And finally it was at Mendhar where he held the historic discussion with King Menānder and converted him to the Buddhist fold. Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ is still known after his name and it is only in Nāgsenī region that we still find some remnants of ancient and medieval history pertaining to this historic episode.

ناگ سین

Time of Birth :

It has been observed previously that Menānder occupied Sāglā around 140 B.C., moved his capital to the city and around this very time had the historic discussion with Nāg Sen, and became Buddhist. As per internal evidence of *Milind Panhö*, Nāg Sen must have been of 25 year old at this time. He could have been of older age also. Before having this final discussion, Menānder had continuously defeated all learned men of Buddhist order and had exclaimed that "All India is an empty thing". If we accept above date of occupation of Śākalā by Menānder and his discussion with Nāg Sen around 140 B.C. he must have started discussing religious matters with persons of Buddhist eminence around 156-152 B.C. i.e. just after few years of his becoming Indian monarch. We know that many learned men had already deserted the country of Śākalā during the period of intense GreekoŚuṅgā War (183-160 B.C.) resulting in massive persecution of Buddhists and the country being strife torn and grief striken. It is during these years that we find Assāgutth̩, the Chief of Buddhist order of *Milind Panhö* holding an assembly of the spirtitual men for trying to salvage the brothern of the order, and moving to Vejantā Palace (Probably at Bactria) and Ketumati Mansion (Probably the residence of Eukradites in the City of Eukratida) along with Śukā (Probably Śuṅgā King Pushyamitra). This meeting[67] must have been held any time between 175 B.C. when Demitrius died and 160 B.C. (when Apollodotus territory had shrunk to only Sauvīra region.) The meeting probably concluded before 170B.C. when Eukradite the King of Bactria is said to have died. Consequently Nāg Sen must have been born any time around 170 B.C. (in confirmity with the rebirth story of Mahāsen) at Kañjaṅgal. This village at the extreme limit of Buddhist holy land in the Himālayas, can be no other place but the Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ. Thus if the year of birth of Nāg Sen is taken as 169-70 B.C. his historic discussion with Menānder near Śākalā being held around 140 B.C. at the age of 29 years, things seem to go smoothly and there seems to be nothing wrong with the proposition[68] (regarding Mahāsen - details in coming pages) both logically, *mythologically* as well as historically.

As per *Milind Panhö* Nās Sen "met Menānder at Sāglā with all the elders, with their yellow robes like lamps, and bringing down upon it the breeze from the heights, where the sages dwelt", which clearly indicates that it must have been pleasant summer months, as Sāglā or Siālkot is just at the outlet of mountaneous Chināb valley through which the cool breeze of Himālayan heights travels down in the summer months.

Lastly it will be interesting to note, for many of us, who believe in mythology and spirituality, that Nāg Sen is credited to have possessed certain miraculous powers. Certain traditions pertaining to these powers are available from both local as well as foreign sources.

We know that Cankunā, the Turkish Magician Minister of Lalitā Ditya of Kashmir had got two images of Buddhā; ~~one of gold he got from~~ somewhere in Panjāb territory, adjacent to Kashmir may be from Sakhī Maidān Vihāra in Mendhar (Poonch), and the other one of stone which he carried to the Valley, and installed at his ~~new capital Parihāspur.~~[69] Again we read about the origin of a most famous statue of Buddha in Indo-China (Vietnam). According to an old tradition there was a statue of Buddha of Emerald which Menānder's teacher Nāg Sen had fashioned out of Magic Emerald by his supernatural powers.[70]

Not much is known about Nāg Sen's later life and nothing more can be said in this regard over herewith authority. However some presumption about him, based on indirect references, can be considered by the students of history as under :

Nāgārjuna, a great scholar had been a student of Satya Siṁha who had propagated Buddhism in Kashmir 150 years before Kuśāns.[71]

This Satya Siṁhā may be no other person but the Śākya Siṁhā of Kashmirī Chronicles[72] and can fairly be identified as Nāg Sen of *Milind Panhö* on the following grounds:-

(i) In Kashmirī chronicles it has been mentioned that 150 years prior to Nāgārjuna, a Buddhist scholar Śākya Siṁha preached Buddhism in Kashmir and that Nāgārjuna a great Buddhist scholar and a contemporary of Kaniśkā (78-110 A.D) lived at Shāhdarhavan Vihāra (Hārwan) in Kashmir in the Ist century A.D. Since the time of King Menānder lies between 190 B.C. to 138 B.C., that of Nāg Sen's birth around 170 B.C., his discussion with Menānder around 140 B.C., the celebrated monk may have outlived the celebrated King for quite a long time, and preached Buddhism in Kashmir.

(ii) Amongst scores of names of Buddhist monks, Bhikśus and preachers, we come across only two names, who have been designated with the title of Siṁha i.e. Buddhā[73] (Śākya Siṁhā), and Nāg Sen (Lion of the hills).[74] But Śākya Siṁhā of *Buddh Caritā* of Aśvagosh and Śākya Siṁhā of 150 years before Nāgārjuna[75] must be quite different persons for obvious reasons of time in which they are said to have lived, and the nature of the work, they are stated to have performed. But the lion of the Hills of *Milind Panhö* and the Śakyā Siṁhā of Tariekh Hassan seem to be one and the same persons. So there is every possibility that Nāgārjuna[76] may have been a student and disciple of Śākya Simhā, lion of the hills or Nāg Sen; and that Śākya Simhā/Satya Simhā may be no other person but Nāg Sen himself.

Persons and Places :

Persons:

i) Milinda stands for King Menānder already described.

ii) Devamātya stands for Dev Mantrī or Kings Chief Counceller.

iii) Nāg Sen is the Central Character of this whole research work.

iv) Śukā in *Milind Panho* has been identified as Devādhipati, i.e. God of Hindu Gods, by Jagdish Kashyap and V. Trenckner. But according to Hindu mythology Śukā is the teacher, Gurū or Tutor of Asuras (i.e. Devils). In *Milind Panhö* we find him depicted as a guide and helper to Buddhist saints and learned Brahmins of Ancient India and not as that of later Purāṇic period or medieval times where he is portrayed as a tutor and helper of Asuras (foreign invaders).
Various critics and commentators of *Milind Panhö* have taken Śukā for Śukrā or Brahaspatī of the Purānic literature which does not seem correct. The person needs to be traced from somewhere in the Buddhist tradition. It appears that the word Śukā in Pāli of *Milind Panhö* is the changed form of the Śuṅgā word of classical Sanskrit literature, representing the dynasty which was responsible for the downfall of Euthydemids. It appears the learned men, common masses and the Chief of Buddhist order, all may have tried to win over their persecutor, the Śuṅgā Chief Pushyamitra, and later secured his help for their salvation from the tyranny of Indo-Greek oppression. And the later with the blessings of

Buddhist spiritual Head, Assāgutth̹, seem to have engineered (through Eukradites) a revolt in the home Kingdom of Demitrius in Bactria, who as seen earlier had been a great persecutor of Indian masses. We also find the tradition that foreign invader of India and the ancient Indian defenders in their classic literature have been nicknaming each other as Asuras (Evil doers). Under such circumstances it is no wonder if Śukā of *Milind Panhö* is the Śungā Chief Pushyamitra, his son, relative or any of his prominent ambassador, who might have visited the much revered saintly person Assāgutth̹ in the Himālayan Valley of Nāgsenī for securing his blessing.

v) Assāgutth̹ is the Arhat and Chief of Buddhist order, dwelling at Vattanīya hermitage, somewhere in the Himālayas who, through some divine power overhears the boasts of Milinda that "All India is an empty thing" and accordingly calls the assembly of learned men of the order, probably at village Siāh or Sai-Draman in the Nāgsenī region.

vi) Mahāsen : As per *Milind Panhö* is the saintly Brahmin, who lived in Ketumatī Mansion, castle of Vejanta Palaces in the heavens of thirty three (Vedic Gods). He was requested by Śukā to beseech himself, to be reborn as Nāgsen for saving the order i.e. Buddhist religion, which he turned down, but later agreed, on the personal request of Assāgutth̹. This very Mahāsen was later reborn as Nāg Sen to dispell King Menānder's doubts.

Now the above acount of *Milind Panhö*, regarding, "Vejanta Palace", "Ketumatī Mansion" and the "Heavens of thirty three", Vedic Gods pertain to Buddhist mythology but can be explained in historcial terms also.

Mahāsen appears to be the Buddhist name[78] of Bactrian pretender King Eukradites, opposed to

Demitrimus, who was instigated to raise a revolt against the Greek rulers of India. The whole conspiracy seems to have been engineered by the Śunga Chief Pushyamitra, the hero of the Greeko- Śunga war. Pushyamitra, in the beginning might have persecuted Buddhist monks for their sympathies for the Greek invaders of India, but later sought the help of Buddhist world of spirituality (Assāgutth̤) for ensuring the defeat of aggressive Greek forces. Accordingly he or any of his ambassador may have visited the great saint Assāgutth̤ at Sāi Draman in Kaśtwāṛ and with his blessings succeeded in prevailing upon Eukradites to engineer a revolt in the Demitrian province of Bactria across the Himālayan region of Hindu Kuś, which was usually considered as the heavenly abode of Vedic Gods by authors of Indian classical literautre. Eukradites later dies around 170 B.C. (killed by his own son)[79] and it is around this very time that Nāg Sen is born. The Vejanta Palace of *Milind Panhö* can very fairly be the palaces of Bactria or those of Eukradia, the city founded by Eukradites, and Ketumatī mansion where, according to *Milind Panhö*, Śukā met Mahāsen, could be the dwelling place of Eukradites, the ruler of Bactria. Thus all these mysterious terms and events can be historcially explained. The Śuṅga engineered revolt against Demitrius at Bactria is a historcial fact.[80]

And if Mahāsen of *Milind Panhö* is not the Eukradites, then he must be some remnant Mauryan Chief of the Aśokan empire, a Buddhist in faith, and an enlightened spiritualist residing around Kapiśā-Gandhāra region.

We know from Greek sources[81] that around 206 B.C. a certain person Sophagasenos (Subhagsena) was ruling over Paropamisadae, where Antiochus III of Syria met him in that year in order to renew his ancestral relationship. The reference apparently is to the relationship between the Seleucid house of Syria and the Mauryas, dating back to the time of Chandragupta. Subhag Sena therefore must be another scion of the Mauryan family ruling independently in Afghānistān.[82] His name ending in Sena suggests that he was a son or a brother of Vīrsena, who is represented by Tārānāth as a descendant of Kunāla and as ruling in Gandhāra. There is no evidence of Euthydemus of having come into clash with Subhag Sena of Kābul till the death of the later around 190 B.C., when Euthydemus took advantage of the situation and extended his sway, probably as far as Śākalā[83].

Mahā Sen could be any descendent of these erstwhile Mauryan rulers of Kapiśā-Gandhāra, with whom Śuṅga Chief might have formed an alliance.

vii) Sönūtur is the learned Brahmin living at Kaṇjaṅgal in the Himālayan mountains of the Guarded Slopes. On ordinary examination the term Sonutur has no literal meaning. Although its phonetic composition is nearer to Kashmirī-Kaśṭwāṛi language, but on close examination, the term appears to be a complex one, consisting of son+Otur. In Kaśṭwāṛī sön stands for Gold and "ötur" stands for childless person (Sanskrit-Aputra). This indicates that Sönutur, prior to the birth of Nāg Sen may not be having a child, or this might be his caste name, which started with the term "Son" or gold. He was a learned and wise Brahmin at who's hands Nāgsen learnt all the vedās and the Vedic lore. He did not behave properly with the elder Röhana, probably under compulsions of local traditions, for which he was later on sorry. Later he was a friend of Röhana, the Arhat and elderly monk at the guarded slopes and still later allowed his son Nāgsen to accompany him for pursuits of knowledge and meditation.

viii) *Röhan* was an Arhat living and meditating at the gaurded slopes. He had buried himself in meditation, and when the assembly of elders & Arhats of the order was called by Assāgutth̤ he appeared before him at the Yugāndhār (Probably Haround Dhār or Rattan Dev peak of the Kaśṭwāṛ region). He obeys the dictates of Śukā and goes for begging of alms at the doors of Sönūtur, for seven long years and ten months, where he is always rebuffed or insulted. But he does not loose his temper and for another decade he acts as a friend of the family. He then takes away Nāgsen to the guarded slopes, where his own hermitage was situated. This specific place was probably the present Chichhā village of Nāgsenī region. Röhan sends Nāgsen to Assāgutth̤ hermitage at Vattniya, i.e. the present Bhāttan village of Nāgsenī. In Chinese version of *Milind Panhö* Röhan is named as Löhan and mentioned as maternal uncle of Nāgsen. He is stated to be a monk of great religious merit, attainment and capability.

Āyu Pāl is the Chief elder at the Sānkheya's (Śākaya Munī i.e. Buddha) hermitage, who was defeated and silenced by King Milinda before he meets Nāgsen and enters the Buddhist fold. The name Āyu Pāl is more nearer to the plain region nomenclature than to the nomenclature of the hill region of Jammu and therefore suggests that this hermitage must be some where away from the Nāgsenī region.

The above discription of persons clearly reveals the on-going tussle between the two predominent faiths of the time i.e. Buddhism and Brahmanism and in *Milind Panhö*, an attempt has been made to show the superiority of non-violent Buddhist faith over the aggressive Brahmanic sect of the time. Rohan continuously tolerates the taunts and insults of Sönūtur Brahmin for seven years and finally succeeds in taking away his son to his own hermitage, as his disciple. Again when Śuka himself requests Mahāsen to beseech himself to be reborn for saving the order, the request is not accepted, but when the request is repeated by Assāgutth̩, the Sangh Nāyak, it is accepted by Mahāsen, which again indicates the superiority of the Buddhist monks and saints over the learned Brahmins, and their gods/lords including Śuka.

The whole story of *Milind Panhö* is like numerous Purānic tales of Dev-Asur Sangrāms (wars between the evil doers and noble men) in which success finally goes to the right doer.

b)Places :

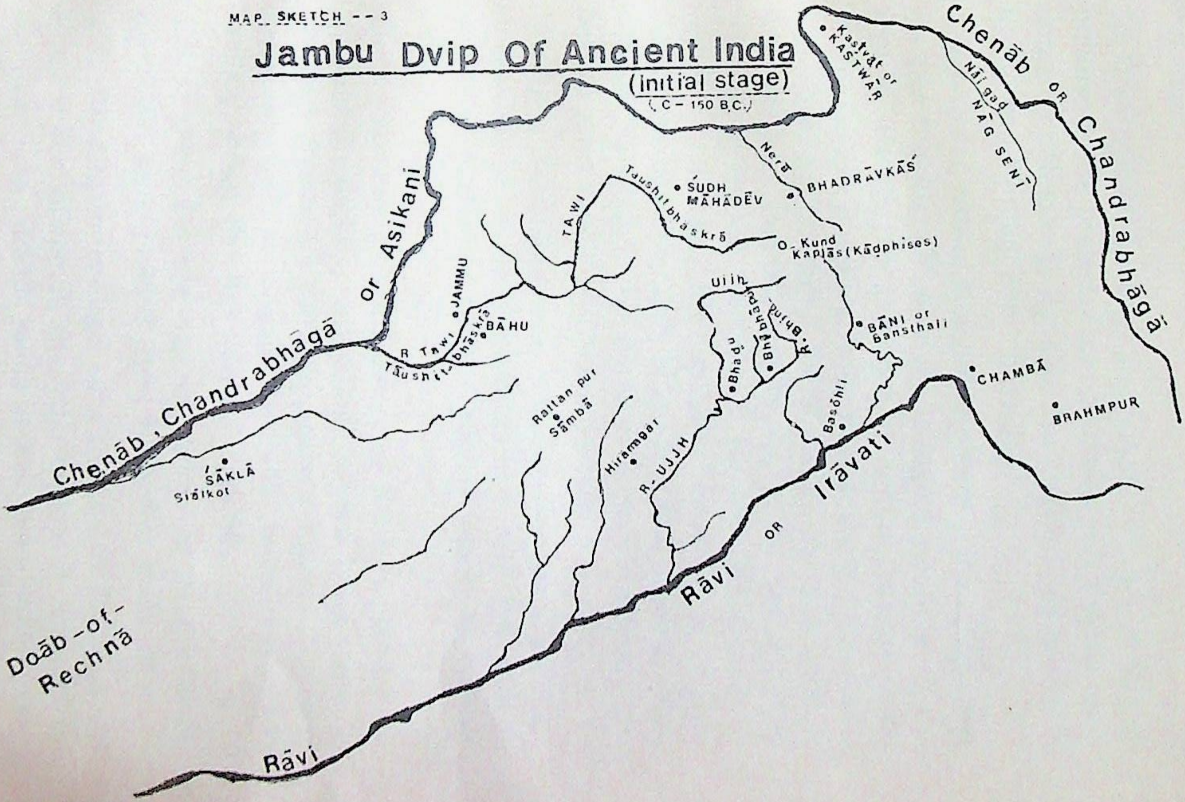
i) *Jambū Dvīp* is repeatedly mentioned in *Milind Panhö* and the term also finds mention in other Purāṇic records. About the exact location and extent of boundaries of Jambū Dvīp not much is known. But the Śākalā of *Milind Panhö* has been mentioned to be situated in Jambū Dvīp. As Dvīp in Sanskrit means a piece of land surrounded by sea like waters, and again as Jammu has been an ancient town, Jāmbhū Dvīp must represent the area between two mighty or sea like rivers of Chināb and Rāvi with its whole catchment area which included Siālkot or Śākalā, Jammu and Duggar region of Śivālik hills. On the North East the Jambū Dvīp must have been surrounded by the only two wet rivers of Jammu i.e. Tawī and Ujj. The region thus surrounded by rivers on all sides finds geographical and terminological justification for the term Jambū Dvīp of ancient times, when sacred or holymen lived in the upper mountains. If the above explanation of Jambū Dvīp is accepted, the broad limits of King Menānder's territory in this region can be well defined and there can be no doubt that Jammu was also under his administrative control. (Map sketch No.3).

MAP. SKETCH -- 3

Jambu Dvip Of Ancient India

(Initial stage)

(C – 150 B.C.)


Kastvat or KASTWAR
Chenāb or Chandrabhāgā
Nāi gad
NĀG SENĪ
Nerū
BHADRĀVKĀŚ
ŚUDH MĀHĀDĒV
Taushit bhaskrō
O Kund Kaplās (Kādphises)
TAWI
Uijh
Bhadu
Bhūbhāgū
R. Bhind
BĀNI or Bansthali
Basōhli
CHAMBĀ
BRAHMPUR
Iravati or Rāvi
R. UJJH
Hirāmgar
Rattan pur
Sāmbā
JAMMU
BĀHU
bhāskrā
R Tawi
Taushit
or Asikani
Chenāb, Chandrabhāgā
ŚĀKLĀ
Siālkot
Doāb -of- Rechnā
Rāvi

ii) *Sāglā* of *Milind Panhö* is the Śākalā of ancient Indian history or the present city of Siālkot in Pākistān, only some 30 miles from Jammu. Its grandeur of medieval. times has already been described.[84]

iii) *Kañjaṅgal* of *Milind Panhö* is the birth place of Nāgsen. As per the sacred book the village is situated at the foot of Himālayan mountains, at the extreme limit of the East to Buddhist holy land and the topography of Kañgaṅgal of *Milind Panhö* tallies (on the basis of internal and external evidences)quite satisfactorily with geographical features of Kaśṭwāṛ mountaneous region. As for the specific location of village Kañjaṅgal is concerned, there are four probabilities. Village Kañjaṅgal, the place of Nāg Sen's birth can be any one of the following villages:

a) The term Kañjaṅgal is a complex one, and must be derived from the terms Kāninī and Ajāl; two village names in Kaśtwāṛ's famous pilgrim centre of Sarthal Devi.

b) Or it must be a combination of Kāṅinī - Jaṅgalwāṛ terms representing two village names lying close to Ṭhaṭhirī (Kaśtwāṛ) enroute ancient Kāngra Kaśtwāṛ route as well as Śākalā Kaśtwāṛ pedestrian route moving along the left bank of Chināb.

c) OR it must be the sacred village of Brahm Shilā (Barshilā) near Ṭhāṭhrī, and Kāṅinī in Kaśṭwāṛ.

d) OR Panḍitgām (village of Panḍits) in Kaśṭwār or some other village in the very region of Nāgsenī in Kaśṭwār. In *Milind Panhö* it has been called as a Brahman village and hence the above assumptions.

v) Yugāndhāra : In *Milind Panhö* this place finds mention as under :

> "He (Assāgutth̤ convened an assembly of the order, on the submit of Yugāndhāra mountain and asked if any member of the order could

face challenge of King Milinda" and all the Arhats vanished at the Yugāndhāra Summit".

Now this Yugāndhār is no else a place but the magestic Haround Dhār or sumit of Nāigad valley of the Nāgsenī. The term Haround is phonetically quite near to Yugāndhāra. The other name for this peak is Nāgisheru meaning the Nāg lion. Nāgsen as we know has been called in *Milind Panhō* (1.1.15) as the lion of the hills, which clearly points to the fact that he belonged to this Himālayan mountain country and therefore the name of Nāgisheru assigned to Yugāndhār. The mountains foot is called as Rattan Dev because of a shrine assigned to Rattan Nāg. Now this Nāgīsheru or Haround Peak in Nāgsenī region is a high land mountain pasture, magestic in shape and form, and rich in summer grass, and below it, just on the slopes of Nāgsenī, lay some of the ancient archeological sites and places mentioned in *Milind Panhö*, as discussed in detail in Chapter-IV.

v) *Vattanīya Hermitage* : In *Milind Panhö* it is mentioned that Röhan asks (Nāgsen to go to the Vattanīya hermitage where Assāgutth the Sangh Nāyak dwelt). At Vattanīya hermitage he did as he was told to do. This hermitage at the guarded slopes is no other a place but the present Bhāttan village in the Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ. Situated at the foot of Majestic Nāgīsheru or Haround mountain range, in the Nāi Gaḍ valley, the village is inhabited by local Brahmins and Rajputs. Two archeological sites at Demzī and Sāi Draman are situated close by. The region is slopy and the geographic features of the region tally with the discription in Milind Panhö. The name of the village Bhāttan is a clear derivation of the term Vattanīya used in the celebrated work. The place lay on the traditional route from Kaśṭwāṛ to Pāḍar, some 12 kms away eastward. The Hermitage of

Sangh Nāyak Assāgutthḥ must have been situated in the village. A fine archeological site (Plate III) of the medievel times is still available close by, on a hill top named Sāi Draman at a distance of some two kṃs from the Bhāttan village. Again the term Sāi or Siāh seems to be an abbreviation of the first half of the term "Assā" of Assāgutthḥ and has a close relation with another important place and one more contemporary saintly person named Āyu Pāl of Sakhī Maidan. Where as Assagutthḥ Sakya and Ayu Pal were great saints, Draman and Maindān have almost the same literal meaning. The chief of the order Assāgutthḥ while living at Bhāttan village must have been having his relgious assemblies at Sāi Draman or the ground of Asāgutthḥ. The location presently has a partly preserved temple ruins and a stone slab with Shārdā Inscription belonging to 9th or 10th century, some damaged stone statues still exist within the temple structure (Plates VIII to XI).

vi) *Demzī* : Some one kilometer further up from Bhāttan, in the Nāi Gaḍ Valley of Nāgsenī, we come across a beatutiful spot known by the name of Demzī. The place does not find any mention in *Milind Panhö*, but as it lies in the close vicinity of Bhāttan village, Haround or Nāgisheru mountains, and has still some archeological remains of medieval times, one is convinced that it must be associated with the Nāg Sen episode. The name of the village Demzī is a changed or Pāli form of Sanskrit word Tapsvī i.e. Hermit. The place had been an idle one for meditation. In the morning hours, the inspiring. glittering, bewitching and bewildering Brahma[85] mountain peaks just across the Chandrabhāgā gorge stands close by, shining like a cone of silver in the clear, calm and shining sky, with enchanted clouds surrounding it all around and depicting the universal truth of *Brahm*, the creator of the universe, and pouring snow white milky waters from the Himālayan heights, into the mouths of needy, hungry and thirsty people of the plains of India. The place must have been the hermitage for meditation of saintly elder Assāgutthḥ called Sangh Nāyak in *Milind Panhö*. It is probably because of the highest piousness of the place, that the Himālayan peak in front of this village is named after Brahmā, and the particular giant tree of the locality also assigned the same nomenclature.

vii) *Guarded Slopes* : This place or region has been described in *Milind Panhō* in the following words:-

"Now at that time there dwelt on the guarded slopes an innumerable company of Arhats and venerable Assāgutthḥ". After the assembly of all the brethern and Śukā, and acceptance of Assāgutthḥ's personal request to Mahāsen, to save the Buddhist order" all the brethern reappeared on the Guarded slopes (Sāi Draman) on the Himālayan mountains except Rohana, who a week before had become buried in meditation. Rohan instantly appeared on the spot". Again it is mentioned that "Rohan again came to Nāgsen at Kañjaṅgal, his birth place. He takes him to Vattanīya hermitage (at Bhāttan), to Vijamvothū (?) and then to the Guarded slopes, and Nāgsen is admitted as a novice into the order at the age of 20 years. "On reaching the guarded slopes Nāgsen thinks low and wrong about his teacher".

The above version points to the probability that Guarded slopes as mentioned in *Milind Panhö* is not a single spot but more than one place. To me the whole of Chander Bhāgā Valley between Reāsī and Pāḍar in Kaśtwāṛ region can be regarded as Guarded slopes, especially the slopy lands of Nāgseni region, east of Kaśtwāṛ on way to Pāḍar. The region is encircled on three sides by the deep gorges of Chināb and on the fourth side by high altitude snow clad mountain

[illegible]

peaks [illegible] nets [illegible] grassy [illegible] affectionate [illegible] distant parts [illegible] of the [illegible] of Gandhar slopes [illegible] land of [illegible] small [illegible] from [illegible] been [illegible]

viii) [illegible] a place where Rōhan had taken [illegible] age of 20 years from [illegible] him as a novice. Clearly [illegible] hermitage of Rōhan on the Gandhar slopes in present [illegible] village. The place [illegible] Rōhan had probably buried himself [illegible] meditation, before he [illegible] assembly of the order.

The [illegible] of cultivated land [illegible] the Nāgsenī region [illegible] among the folk people [illegible] castle at the [illegible] most secure [illegible] at the hands [illegible] assigned [illegible]

ix) *[illegible]*
in [illegible]

[illegible] Mahāsen, [illegible] and that [illegible] requested [illegible] the world of men. Śukā himself goes to Ketumatī and requests Mahāsen for rebirth".

The above version clearly indicates that these two places are heavenly abodes of Vedic gods, a mythological concept or some very sacred and mysterious places in the Himālayan region. The historical geopgraphy explains the places as under :

The Purāṇic concepts regarding Devtās and Asurs and their respective worlds are quite contradictory to the Pārthian and Irānian concepts. Therefore there should be no wonder, if Buddhits, who's sympathies for foreign invaders were well known, designates the handsome, well built and white complexioned North West frontier aggressive inhabitants as Devas and their land as the land of thirty three (Vedic Gods). It is also widely believed that most of the ancient Indian classical literature was composed and written in the land of Sapt Sindhu and North Western Himalayan Valleys, and other regions around it. Under such circumstances Vejanta Place of *Milind Panhö* is the Bactrian Place in the capital city of Eukratidia, which is recorded to have been founded by Eukratide.[86] The term Vejanta of Milind Panho being used as the historic term for the kingdom of Bactria in this Buddhist scripture.

Ketumatī Mansion : This place lying within Vejanta Place of *Milind Panhö* can be no other place but the mansion or dwelling place of Eukratide in terms of history. It is over here that, according to *Milind Panhō*, Śukā (and probably Assāgutthḥ) met Mahāsen and made hims to accept the proposal, which as per the story of celebrated work made him to die and as a result of it he was reborn as Nāg Sen, who later defeated Ṃenānder. Historically also we know, that the pretender Celucid King Eukratide, who occupied Bactira, in Demitrius time was assassinated around 170 B.C. by his own son brutally when he was marching homewards in triumph, after killing Agathocles.[87]

This incidentally reveals the politico-religious manures undertaken by the Buddhist monks and priests as well as Indian rulers defending their frontiers in the context of persecution of the general masses as mentioned in *Milind Panhö*.

In *Milind Panhö* the allegation of persecution of Buddhist has been levelled against Menānder and it can be explained as under :-

Firstly the persecution of common masses whether Buddhist or non-Buddhist was the result of continued war for a long time between Demitrian-Apollodotus forces on one hand and the Śuṅgā forces on the other. Menānder being the representative monarch of the Indo-Greeks, was naturally to be blamed for all the evils of his preceding lineage.

Secondly a long spell of time between the actual happening of events and their recording in *Milind Panhö*, basically a Buddhist reilgious work, may have resulted in the wrongful identification of the real persecutor.

Thirdly to quote R.D. Vādekar[88] Buddhist priests and writers had been in the practice of distorting history in such a way to suit their own religious interest.

The meeting of Bactrian King Eukratide with the Buddhist saint from Kaśṭwāṛ may look strange to the readers, but it is a historical fact, that not to speak of ordinary masses, many eminent political persons and powerful rulers from Kashmir and Afgānistān right from the ancient times to the recent past (Yāqub Shāh from Kashmir, King Shāh Shujāh-ul-Malik of Afgānistan, 1818 A.D) had taken refuge in the Himālayan Valleys including that of Kaśṭwāṛ.

Pātlīputra and Ashöka Park : "Assāgutth now sends Nāgsen to Pātliputrā which is 100 Yojan away, and where Dharmādhikārī dwelt in Ashoka Park for learning the Buddha word. Nāgsen complains of greatness of distance but later agrees to go".

This version clearly indicates that Pātliputra of *Milind Panhö* must be none of the places in the immediate vicinity of Kaśtwāṛ but the world famous centre of Buddhist studies of ancient and medieval times, close to Nalandā and Patnā in Bihār. And if we assume a journey of 15 to 20 miles a day on foot in those days of lack of conveyance, it might have taken Nāgsen some one or two months to reach Pātlīputra where he stayed for six months learnt all Pītkas and also attained Arhatship, under the guidance of Dharmādhikārī. After that, on being remembered by his brethren of the order, at the Guarded slopes, he instantly vanished at Pātliputra, and appeared before them.

This discription clearly confirms that Pātliputra of *Milinda Panhö* was the famous Pātliputra of Magadha empire of Śuṅgās and Kanvas and the chief centre of Buddhist knowledge in eastern India.

Even if we believe the assumption of Nāgsen's instant disappearance from Patlīputra as baseless and impossible, it might have taken him another month or so to reach his hermitage in the Nāgsenī region. Ashoka Park in Pātliputra must be the seat of Dharmādhikārī's school of learning.

xi) *Sānkheya Hermitage : The scene of final Discussion* : As per *Milind Panhö* Sānkheya Hermitage was the scene of final discussion between King Milind and Nāgsen. The place seems to be named after Śākyā Muni Buddha and was situated 12 yojans (84-96 miles) away either from Śākalā or Kashmir. We have the following description of this event in *Milind Panhö* :-

"Seeing the pleasantness of the weather and inspired by it, Milinda goes to the Sānkhey hermitage, exchanges pleasantaries and in the discourse silences the elder Āyu Pāl and exclaims that "All India is an empty thing"; and that "Nāg Sen dwelt at the Hermitage of Sānkheya with a compnay of brethren appearing in the Sānkheya grove like the lion of the hills". Then Devmātya, counsellor of Milinda tells the King to go to him and put your questions to him". This clearly indicates that the scene of discussion between King Milinda and Nāgsen was held at Sānkheya grove away from "Śākalā". Now the important question arises as to where was this hermitage of Sānkheya situated?

The scene of discussion did not lay in the city of Sāglā is borne out also by the fact that in the very beginning of the outer story of *Milind Panhö*, it has been said that on expressing his desire to have a discussion with the teachers of Lokāyat the 500 Yonkās had provided him the names of six learned teachers of the region who they felt could dispell the doubts of the King.[89] The King went to them one by one and silenced them in the discussions. After defeating *PURAÑKAŚYAP* and *MĀKHLĪ GOŚĀL* the King is said to have exclaimed that *"JAMBŪ DVĪP"* is an empty thing". It is further recorded there that the King would immediately go to the place where a Śraman, a learned Brahman or a family holding Pandit was said to be residing, ask him questions and on not being able to satisfy the King, they would leave the place". It is therefore clear from the above that the King must have had discussion with all the learned men of the region (including those lying outside the city of Śākalā) before uttering the aforesaid boast. The name of the elder Āyū Pāl of the Sānkheya grove (Parivein), who he visited later, for the final discussion, is not mentioned in the above list. It is further recorded that "Śākalā was devoid of all learned men for twelve years and therefore the final discussion must have been held somewhere outside Śākalā.

To me Sakhī Maindān in Mendhar is the Sānkheya Hermitage of *Milind Panhō* and the scence of final discussion between the two on the following grounds:

a) The scene of discussion as per *Milind Panho*[90] was laid at a spot 12 Yojans from Kashmir[91] which on calculation comes to be around 96 miles away. This distance fairly agrees with the distance between Nāg Senī region of Kaśṭwāṛ and Mendhar in Poonch through the shortest route passing through Symthan (11400′) and Toshmaidān Passes (11400′).

b) The capital of King Menānder was at Śākalā but for almost all intellectual encounters that he had with the learned men of his time, he is said to have been "inspired by the pleasantness of weather", which indicates Menānder's inclination and love of nature. The pleasantness of the climate and extensive scenic beauty of the country of Sākalā as described in the celebrated work clearly points out that the scene of discussion must have been some where in the hill country, of Pir Pānchāl.

Now Mendhar in Poonch is a small but extremely beautiful valley in the foothills of Himālayas bordering Kashmir Valley and at the foot of Toshmaidān Pass. it is surrounded on three sides by mountains covered with pine trees and greenery; and traditional routes connecting the valley with the plains of Panjāb lay close to it. The place was therefore an ideal one for the establishment of a hermitage or school of learning and its scenic beauty is quite comparable to Sānkheya Parivien as described in *Milind Panhö*.

c) The historic discussion which brought to an end, by silent and peaceful means, the rule of Greeko-Bactrian rulers in North West of India, was held at the hermitage of Sānkhey and Sākhī Maidān in Mendhar has retained this nomenclature even to this day, inspite of many upheavals of last two thousand years, political change and religious transformations. The massive ruins of a temple or a Vihāra (Plate XXI to XXIII) still bear a testimony to the above noted fact. The archealogical site may have been a Vihāra which Menānder is said to have constructed after his conversion into Buddhist fold. Again it is, probably Menānder who named the site of his Vihāra as Śākyā Parivien after Śākyā Muni or Lord Buddha.

d) As the greatest among the great Indo-Scythian Kings Menānder accepted his defeat, from Nāg Sen, became a monk and attained Arhatship here at Sānkhey's Hermitage in Mendhar valley, the event must have attracted the attention of contemporary scholars, and elite section of society, as well as ruling class and consequently the place must have been remembered after him and called as Menānder, which with the passage of time, changed to Mendhar, a name retained to this day.

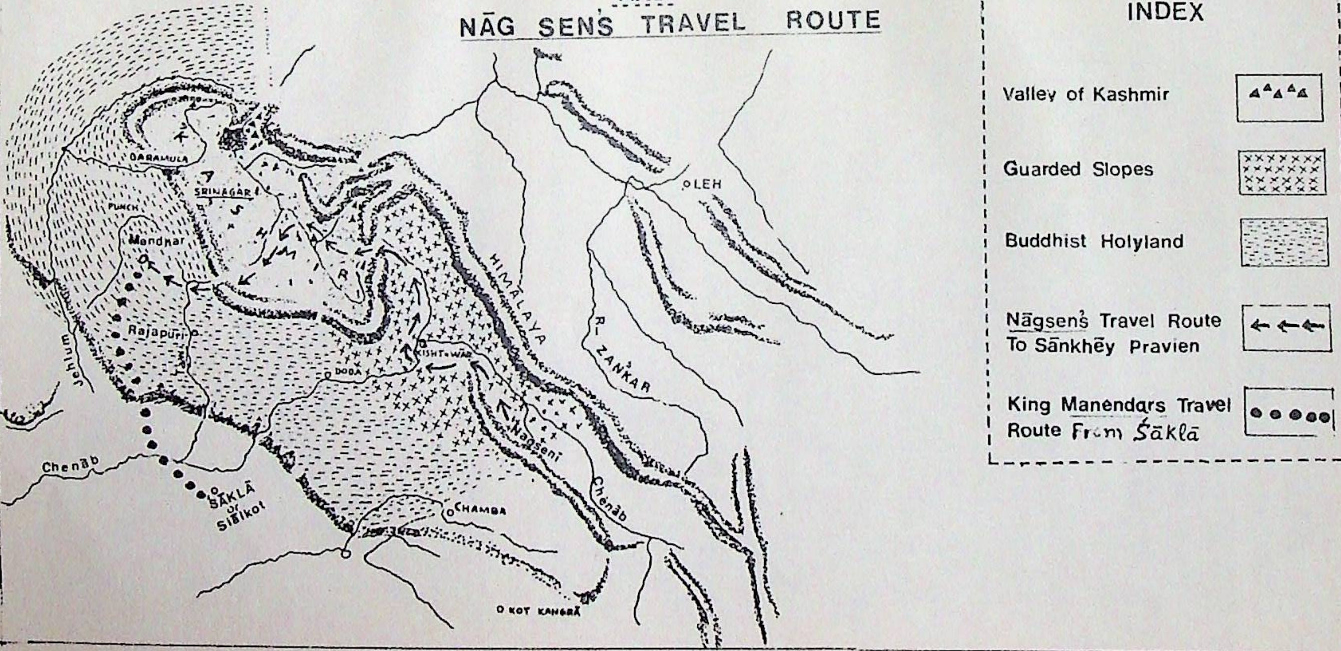
e) Each school of learning and the hermitage associated with some saintly person in ancient times had a residential-cum-meditational hermitage of the elder of that particular school, as seen earlier in the case of Assāgutthḥ of Vattanīya hermitage in Nāgsenī Kaśṭwāṛ. Similarly in Mendhar Valley also we have two archealogical sites which seem to be connected with the Menānder Nāgsen discussion. The site of residential-cum-meditational hermitage of elder Āyū Pāl and Nāgsen was at the present Rāmkund temple site, (Plate XXX) whereas the Vihāra must have been constructed at an open place, where the great discussion was held. As per *Milind Panhö,* in additonal to 500 Yonkas, Devmātya and Menānder, 80 thousand monks, hermits and Arhats accompanied Nāgsen to the venue of the discussion, and the present site of Sākhi Maidān (Plate XVII), could very much accommodate a big gathering.

f) The pleasantness of the weather, the intellectual superiority and unconquered ego of King Menānder had inspired him to go to the Sānkhey Hermitage, where he held his first discussion with the elder of the hermitage, and only after defeating Āyu Pāl in this discussion, he was advised by his Minister (Dev Mātya) to go to Nāgsen, with whom he had a long and open discussion, in the presence of a huge gathering. Naturally the place must have been an open ground. Now when we enter Mendhar Valley from Kotlī Bhimber side (now in Pakistan occupied Kashmir), we come across a very small side valley of Rāmkund (Plate XXX). This must have been the site of elder Āyu Pāl's residential hermitage and some two kilometres further southwards we have the ancient location of Sākhi Maidān, the venue of historic discussion.

g) Heuntsang while on his way to Rājouri (C-646 A.D.) came to Poonch via Toshmaidān Pass. Why did he not go to Rājouri direct through a shorter and easier route is an important question. Probably he was attracted by some important Buddhist pilgrim centre. located in the vicinity of Poonch as recorded by him.[92] "According to his version there was a Bodh Vihāra (or Stūpa) in Parṇotsva much known for its miracles. A few decades earlier similar experience was had by King Lalitāditya in the vicinity of this very region as recorded by Kalhana[93]. The important Buddhist site of Lalitāditya's time can fairly be identified with the temple structures of Rāmkund and Sakhī Maidān in Mendhar.

MAP SKETCH ---4

GUARDED SLOPES ; BUDHIST HOLY LAND AND NĀG SENS TRAVEL ROUTE


MAP SKETCH No-- 4
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Jehlum
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SĀKLĀ or Siālkot
CHAMBA
KOT KANGRĀ
DODA
KISHTWAR
Nāgseni
Chenāb
HIMĀLAYA
R- ZANKAR
LEH

Route of Travelage : What could have been the route of travelage of Nāg Sen from Nāg Senī to Mendhar is an interesting question, but nothing can be said with authority. However, the topography of the region, location of traditional routes and the "description" of his journey indicates that he had travelled to the "Country of Śākalā" alongwith his disciples through cities, towns and villages and this journey is mentioned in the celebrated work as his Alms tour. He might have therefore travelled from his Vattaniya Hermitage in Nāgsenī region to Kaśtwāṛ town, thence over the Syṁthan or Singhpura[93] pass to Verināg and Anantnāg, to Bijbehāṛā, to Shopiān, over Toshmaidān Pass to Poonch and thence to Mendhar and Sānkeys Hermitage, across Krishanā Ghāti (Map sketch No.4). The whole distance comes round about 90 miles i.e. twelve yojans. The distance to Poonch from the valley over Toshmaidān is the shortest. Menānder's popularity seems to have travelled even to the Shupiān in Kashmir, as a village close to this Tehsil Headquarters is still called Menānder after his name.[94]

یہ پیراگراف
قابل توجہ اور
قابل تنقید
ہے

As Kashmir has not been mentioned anywhere in Menānder's domain, and as few of his coins are said to have been located from North Western or South Eastern limits of the Valley, the main valley seems not to have been under his direct rule. Nāgsen therefore might have thought it better to take shortest travel route passing through villages towns and cities of Kaśṭwāṛ, Kashmir, Poonch and Mendhar to reach Sānkhey Hermitage on his way to "Śākalā, but he happened to see Menānder at the, Hermitage of Āyu Pāl. Nāg Sen did not go to Śākalā via Kaśṭwāṛ-Ṭhāṭhrī Siālkot pedestrian route, or Kaśṭwāṛ Bhadarwāh Jammu route for the following reasons :

i) Firstly this tour of his as described in *Milind Panhö* was his Alms tour and the region along the above referred two routes had been mountaneous, slopy, difficult to traverse (Sanskrit Kaśṭwāṭ) and very rarely inhabited.

ii) Secondly most of the eastern mountainous region of Jammu Kāngṛā belt did not fall under Menānder's domain and was dominated by independent Panjāb tribes such as Audumbarās, Trigartās, Rajanyās and Kunindās.

Centuries after Menander's acknowledgment of Buddhism, his attainment of Arhatship, his becoming a Bhikśu, subsequent downfall of his empire and emergence of Brahmanism, the Sānkhey hermitage also, in due course of time seems to have undergone a change of religious order, and received the name of Rāmkund and Krishanā Ghāti after Rāma and Krishana. Still later with the coming of Mohamadan rule, the site seems to have faced distruction, with certain massive ruined structures still lying at the site.

During army operations of 1948 A.D. in the region, to flush out Pakistani invaders, some Indian army officer is said to have come across certain statues, carvings and other articles of antiquity and some of these were still lying in the residential premises of Army Officers at Poonch in 1978 when I visited them.

Buddhist Holyland

This term finds extensive use in the Holy Buddhist scriptures, including *Milind Panhö*. The Brahman village of Kañjaṅgal has been mentioned to be situated at the extreme limit to the east of Buddhist Holy land. Also it has been called as middle country at the foot of Himālyas. If Kañjaṅgal is identified as Kāṇinī- Jaṅgalwāṛ region in Kaśtwāṛ, the Buddhist Holy land must be located in the middle mountain country, immediately bordering Kashmir in the west, south and eastern directions. Actually it comprises of Himālayan mountain valleys and Shivālak hill region bordering the Valley on all side, especially its south-eastern sides (See Map sketch No.4). Rich Buddhist cultural heritage as well as influence can be noticed in Himālayan valleys all around Kashmir. In recent years the finding of Gilgit Manuscripts from Gilgit region, Archaeological sites from Sakhī Maidān, Mendhar, location of Brahmī script from Śudh Mahādev, Bhadarwāh, Kaśṭwāṛ and Hārwan tiles, identification of Nāgseni region as the place of Nāgsen, and Buddhist vihar at Akhnoor, the sacredness of this Holy land of Buddhists, becomes self-evident. It is this very Buddhist Holy land of ancient times which seems to have emerged as Jambu Dvīp of ancient Brahmanic literature and which later in Purānic period assumed confusing topographical limits.

Footnotes :

1. Other foreigners occupying the North Western borders of India were Pahlvās, Śakas and Kuśāṇas, Selucids (Greeko- Bactrians).
2. N.W.I. pp.69-73.
3. Ibid. p. 102. c.f. Ptolemy VII.16 and Tarn - G.B.I. pp 140-55.
4. K.C.A.P. 5; N.W.I.P. 103 c.f. Raj. I V. pp 101; 107-08; 115-117
5. N.W.I.P. 105. The first of these Demitrias was established in Arācosiā on the main route from Seistān to Ghaznī, from where this route ran via Kābul, Puśkalāvatī and Taksilā into the interior of India. The second Demitriās was established on the Indus Delta. This city is referred to by the Kāśīkā Vrittī (Pāṇiṅi-IV. 2.7.6. as Dattamitrī among the Sauvīrās. In the Naśik Cave Inscription No. 19, a donor is described as Dattāmitrī-Yakā i.e. hailing from Dattāmitrī.
6. Around this time his own sons were appointed by Demitrius as Sub-Kings in other important areas of his

domain. Euthydemus II was appointed as Sub-King of Bacteria, and second son Demitrius II as Sub-King of Kapiśā. Euthydemus II died couple of years later and Dmitrius II was then transferred to Bacteria. 3rd son Pantaleon who was murdered during the Aśvaka revolt of Gandhāra was replaced by the fourth son Agathocles. It was this fourth son of Demitrius who tried hard to win the support and goodwill of his Buddhist subjects as indicated by his two coins with Khārośtī legend. (N.W.I. P.133-14) and again it is he who had to bear the brunt of Eukradites attacks of North West India.

7. The years between 190 B.C. -186 B.C. had been wasted in subduing the (Aśvaka) Afghān revolt and consequently delayed his 2nd invasion of Northern India.
8. N.W.I.P., 119. f.n. 42 c.f. Acta Orientalia Vol. I.P.27
9. R.T. *Māhābhaśyā* (Paṇiṁī); *Mahābhārta; Garg Saṁhitā, Divyāvdān Mālvikāganimitram,* Kālidas etc.
10. Strabo, Macrindle, Rapson and Vincent Smith etc.
11. N.W.I.pp. 167-68/30.
12. N.W.I.p. 152.
13. Ibid. c.f. Ed. Cowell and Neil p.434, Aśokavadān.
14. Ibid. p.155/0 19, p. 179/02. (VIII).
15. It is probably this conspiracy between Śuṅgas and Eukradites of Bactriā which finds mention in *Milind Panhō* in the form of Assāgutta, and Śukās visit to Vejanta (Eukradites lodge). Śukā (as a historical figure) must be the Śungā King or one of his agents, or Eukradites.
16. N.W.I.p. 79. c.f. G.B.I. pp. 75-78
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid - Annexure - Plate XIV-6.
19. Ibid. p. 135. f.n. 101.
20. M.P. Vad. III; 333-34 V.
21. A.I.U. P.113
22. C.H.I. P. 550
23. M.P. Trech. Intro. XXIII.
24. C.H.I. p.550.
25. N.W.I. p. 93/) 35.

26. Ibid. p.137/0 57.
27. N.W.I.p. 95-98 (For marriage custom with cousin sisters See Infra-Cultural Evidence, Chapter III.
28. Ibid. p. 98 c.f. C.H.I. PL VI-15.
29. Ibid. c.f. M.V.D. I.C.C. PL IV-2 & C.H.I. PL VIII-25
30. Ibid. c.f. C.H.I. P.552
31. Ibid. c.f. L.M.C. PL. VI. P.515
32. Ibid. c.f. C.H.I. P.552
    One is tempted by these and other observations to think that if it was Queen Agathoclia, from whon Kālidāsa got the inspiration for characterization of Shakuntalā.
33. G.B.I.p. 167 c.f. N.W.I. 96/0 36-37.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. N.W.I. p. 109-114
37. Ibid f.n. 23
38. I.H.Q. XXIX 1953 pp. 180-82. An ancient reference to Menānder's invasion by Dr. V.S. Agrawala, where he sugests an amendation of महेन्द्रो into मनेन्द्रो c.f. *Mahābhāśya* (3.2.2).
39. G.B.I. pp. 22-33. N.W.I. p. 213-17.
40. N.W.I. p.215/ 8./CH. VIII.
    The Indo-Greek Dracham seems to be the parent coin of Derham circulated in some present M.East countries. See Also Select Inscriptions Vol. I. pp. 102-03. Sircar D.C.
41. Moralia, 821. D.E. (X. 276-79) in Loeb Classical Library Ed.)
42. N.W.I. p.216 and 204 c.f. J.B.O.R.S. XIV 1928. line 47-48.
43. Ibid - c.f. f.n. 65 0 4 and 8.
44. Moralia - 821. D.C. c.f. N.W.I. P.207. f.n. 16.
45. Opamma Katha. 70. M.P. Vad. P.40 c.f. N.W.I. P.6 f.n.15
46. G.B.I. P.227
47. N.W.I. P.208
48. N.W.I. P.230-232.

49. Ibid. 234-35
50. A.I.U. p.112-114
51. Ibid P.134-35
52. M.P. Trek. P.30/P-XIV-V
53. T.K. Mohi-Pre.2
54. M.P. Treck. 1-15.
55. *Vāyu Purāṇa* - 37/382-84/P. 456.—"स्त्रीणां बाल बधेनैव"
56. J.B.O.R.S. XIV. 1928, pp. 402 Sq.LL.27 Sq.c.f. N.W.I. p.152.
57. *Divyāvadāna*, Aśokāvadāna. pp. 433-34
58. N.W.I. p. 150/1.
59. A.I. p. 297.
60. Ibid. यो में श्रमण शिरो दासयति तस्याह दीनार शतं दास्यामी।
61. Ibid. Ref. *Early History of India.*
62. *Garg Saṃhitā* op. cit. L.41. c.f. N.W.I. p. 122 f.n. 50
    यवना ज्ञापयिष्यन्ति (नश्येरन्) च पार्थिवाः
63. Yug Purāṇ op. cit LL-45-46 c.f. Ibid. f.n. 55
    ततो युग वशात् तेषां यवनानां परिक्षये
    साकेते सप्त राजानो भविष्यन्ति महाबलाः।
64. Ibid - LL. 94-103. c.f. f.n. 56
65. Ibid - LL. 111-115.c.f. f.n. 57
    देवो द्वादश वर्षाणि अनावृष्टि करिय़ष्यति
    प्रजा नाशं गमिष्यन्ते दुर्भिक्ष भयपीडिता।
66. *Garg Saṁhitā*. L. 40., c.f., Ibid. f.n. 51
67. M.V.D. has pointed that the meeting of Śuṅgā King Pushyamitra with Pretender King of Bactria Eukradite may have been held near Taxilā. NWI. P. 189
68. Mahāsen must be either a Mauryan remanant Chief of Kapiśā-Gandhāra region or Indianized version of Eukradites.
69. R.T.
70. G.B.I. pp. 267-68 & I.G. p. 98.
71. B.K. Fidda. P.23
72. Ibid. p.11, 23 and Tariekh Hassan, Vol. II. p.42- Fauq. The two names Satya Siṁhā and Śākya Siṁhā as mentioned by the author of B.K. seems to be one and

the same person but appear to be different because of a slip of pen.

73. Buddh. Carita *Sacred Books of the East Book*. XVIII/24-31.

74. M.P. Treck.

75. Fauq-Tariekh Hassan - P.III.

76. After Nāgsen Nāgārjuna was the greastest scholar and Buddhist preacher in the valley. He is titled as Bodhisatva as also the solo lord of the land (R.T. p.78-Stien). It was due to his knowledge that Buddhists of Kashmir maintained their ascendency over other Achāryas. *Hindu History of Kashmir*, N.H. Wilson p.III. He is said to have denominated Śaka era-ibid. Nāgārjuna is said to have been a Śaivite in his early youth, for he is said to have composed CHITSANTOSH AND PARMACHANA both embodying Śavist ideas (Shrādā Peeth research series srinagar)- In religious discussion he is said to have been a Śavite R.T. Nāgārjuna spring in the village Supor in Bātho, near the Hirāpur hill in Shopiān Kashmir is known upto this day -Tariekh Hassan, Vol. I, P.130.

78. Mahāsen literally means one with a great body or one who is dependent on some superior one.

79. N.W.I.P., p. 135

80. Ibid. p. 155, 186.

81. Polyby XI. 34. 11. Also J.A.S.B. 1920 . pp. 305, 310 & Tarn G.B.I. P. 10 c.f. N.W.I. p. 61.

82. N.W.I. p. 61.

83. Ibid. p. 75.

84. For Jambū DvĪp - See K.T. July 28 1991. Also Annexure I.

85. T.S.J. p. 42.
Dedicated to Brahmā, the third God of Holy Hindu Trinity is a group of five peaks, 20000 to 21000 feet high to the North East of Kaśtwār which are named after the God. Some of these peaks are so steep that they are bare of snow, while others are always clothed in it". Not only this even a particular lofty tree found in the region is named as Brahmā tree and showered reverence. Even one or two villages of the region are

also named after the God such as Barshilā or Brahma Shillā.

86. Tolmy VI.II7, c.f. N.W.I. f.n. 30 p. 186
According to Tarn G.B.I. pp. 208-9. The city has been mentioned by only Tolmy. Possibly it was Demitriās-city founded by Demitrius, earlier ruler of Bactria-renamed as Eukratidia by Eukratide, as he could not have allowed the continued association of his enemy's name with a city in the heart of his Kingdom.

87. N.W.I. p. 186. c.f. Justin.

88. M.P. Vad. Intro. c.f. N.W.I p. 206 f.n. 15.

89. i) Pūraṇ Kashyap.
ii) Mākhli Gośāl.
iii) Niganṭh Nāth Pūt i.e. Son of the Niganṭ Nāth.
iv) Sanjay Vālthi Pūt i.e. Son of Sanjay VālthĪ.
v) Ajit Keś Kāmbli i.e. Unconquerable wearing a blanket (of hair colours i.e. black, grey or white).
vi) Kākudh Kāchān.
The term Kāchān which contains in it the common caste suffix "an" of Bhales and Bhadarwāh and Rajori Poonch region indicates that some of these learned men must have been from Jammu hill region.

90. V. Treneckner pp. 82-83.

91. Maqbhool Ahmed - In his book *Historcial Geography of Kashmir* has mentioned various measures or distance which can be corelated with Yojan as under :-
1. Farsākh = 3 miles ; 30 Farsākh = 100 Kroh = 90 miles
Therefore one Kroh 9/10 miles.
1 Yojan has been mentioned in Hindi Shabad Sāgār as 8 Kroh. Therefore one Yojan = 8x9/10 = 7.2 miles. Therefore the scene of discussion = 7.2x 12= 86.4 miles away.
J.P.H. Vogel in *History of Panjāb Hill States,* p.101 describes 1 Kos (Kroh ?) = 4/3 miles.
One Yojan therefore must be = 4x8 = 10.66 miles and consequently 12 Yojan = 12x10.66 = 128 miles.
Again Yojan according to Capleston (c.f. N.W.I. P.371) is a very controversial measure of distance. It has been changing with time. According to him one yojan

is equal to two and a half miles, which means that the place of discussion was only 30 miles away from Kashmir.

92. T.H. Beal. p.200

93. R.T. Vol. IV. 265-76

94. The term syṁthan and Singhpur seems to have been derived from the word Scythian used for Greeko-Bactrian rulers.

95. There is every possibility that King Menānder after entering into Buddhist fold and becoming a monk might have come on a pilgrimage to the Vattanity's hermitage in Nāgsenī, named the region after Nāgsen, Syṁthan as Scythian and village near Supian as Menānder a name retained to this day. Even the very name Kaśṭwāṛ has some thing to resemble with Kathiawāṛ, the undisputed province of Euthydemid Kings for nearly one hundred years. I feel even the Rājput title of "Singh" is a changed abbreviation of Scythian-Scynth-Singh.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSIONS

From the study of life and works of Nāgsen as mentioned in last two chapters it must be clear that he belonged to the Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ and the following direct and indirect references provide further support and evidence to the aforesaid facts.

A) *Historical Evidence*: There is no denying the fact that serious conflicts between Buddhist and non-Buddhists had taken place, in North Western India, around early centuries of Christian era. Buddhist traditions describe Pushyamitra, the great Śuṅga King (183-149 B.C) of Pātliputra as a great persecutor of Buddhism. It is said of him that acting on the advice of his Brahmin chaplin Pushyamitra made up his mind to destroy the teachings of Buddha. He marched out from Pātliputra with a four fold army destroying stūpas, burning monasteries and killing the monks, as far as Śākala. Pushyamitra issued a declaration that whosoever would present him with the head of a Śramaṇa, would be rewarded with one hundred Dinārs.[1]

यो में श्रमण शिरो दास्यति तस्याह दीनार शतं दास्यामि।

The allegation cannot be rejected as baseless. Around this very time anti Buddhist crusade by the Kings of Kashmir, particularly 'Jālukā and Dāmodra has been recorded by various historians.[2]

Menānder occupied Śākalā around 140 B.C. and proceeded further eastward upto Mathurā. By his gallant

Scythian army, unsurpassable wisdom and scholarly discussions, he subdued all the powerful sects of the local inhabitants, whether of intellectual class warriors or religious Pandits. Those who did not submit escaped to the inner mountaneous regions. There was no way out. The dominant intellecutal class, whether Buddhist or Brahmins, being thus persecuted from the eastern, western and southern sides of the country had no option but to retreat to the inner Himālayan valleys particularly that of Jammu, as it was nearer to Kashmir, the seat of learned Brahmiṅs, as well as Rishis and Munis, centre of art and culture. The inner mountain valleys of Kaśṭwāṛ and Bhadarwāh were still nearer to Kashmir, drained by Chandrabhāgā and its tributaries, ideal places for hermitage and meditation and safe from all aggression. It is perhaps in this context as recorded in *Milind Panho* that "Sāglā had been devoid of brethren of the order, Brahmins, Śramaṇas and laymen".

The King would visit every place where a learned Pandit dwelt and put him his questions. Being unable to answer them or satisfy the King, the learned men would leave the place and move to other places.[3]

Right from ancient times to the present day, Kaśṭwāṛ as well as its adjoining hill region, have always proved to be safe refuge for all the non-submissive and disgruntled elements of the valley of Kashmir and other surrounding regions. Kashmir history, Rājataraṅgiṇi as well as other historical references pertaining to Kashmir bear a testimony to the above noted fact. People fleeing from Kashmir and Panjāb have always found a safe shelter in Jammu hills and there is no wonder if around the time of Menānder's reign, hermits, Brahmins, recluse, and Śramaṇas also escaped from Panjāb and Kashmir and sought refuge in the inner Himālayan mountain valleys of Chināb i.e. Kaśṭwāṛ, Nāgsenī, Bhales, Pāḍar, Dachan and Maṛwā, the Guarded slopes of the Jammu Hill region.

B. ***Geographical Evidence:***

The region of Nāgsen's activities and hermitage has been described in *Milind Panho* as guarded and slopy, mountaneous and Himālayan in character, and nearer to Kashmir and Śākalā and this can be no other place but the Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ. A lot of geographical evidence provides support to this presumption.

Firstly, Nāgsenī region and the table land town of Kaśṭwāṛ is nicely guarded by natural topography, as it is surrounded by the mighty Chināb and its deep gorges on all the three sides and high altitude peaks and dense Deodar forests on the fourth side. At the same time it has numerous beautiful small side valleys, carved and drained by Chināb and its tributaries.These valleys, side valleys, overhanging mini valleys and other high alitude mountain hutmets, particularly those in Kaśṭwāṛ Bhadarwāh, Bhales, (also in Rajouri and Poonch mountaneous region) has been ideal places for meditation, hermitage and learning of vedic lore.

Secondly as per instruction of Rohan, Nāgsen could not go to Śākalā for dispelling the doubts of Menānder. Rainy season had commenced, and it did not allow him to move out of the gorgeous Chandrabhāgā valley, and gaurded slopes, as the region is highly vulnerable to flash floods, slips and route blockades during this season.

Thirdly we see that in the introductory of *Milind Panho* translation by V.Treneckner, famous rivers of the region have been mentioned at four places. At three places the author of the celebrated work simply repeats the names of five rivers so often enumerated in the Pitkās i.e. Gangā, Yamunā, Akhirāvatī, Sarabhu and

Māhi,which clearly indicates that the occurence of these names in *Milind Panhō* is the religious influence of the later stage of development of Pitkās on it. At the fourth place the author of *Milind Panho* has mentioned five other river names, the Sindhu, Saraswatī, the Vetravatī the Vitaṁsā and Kandabhāgā; of these the first two are well known. Max Muller suggests that Vitaṁsā is Vitāstā (i.e. Jehlum) flowing through Kashmir and adjoining region of Poonch mountains. Vetravatī is affluent of Yamuna and Kandabhāgā rises in the North West Himālayas i.e. modern Kināb.[4]

The fourth mention of river names appears more authentic. It contains the names of two important rivers flowing through the land of Nāgsen-Menānder episode i.e. Vitāstā through the valley of Kashmir and Chināb (Kināb) through Nāgsenī ; Kaśṭwāṛ Kaniṇī, Jaṅgalwāṛ, Akhnoor and Siālkot region. The name Kināb assigned to river Chināb as recorded by V.Trenecker, is so, probably because it flowed through the land of Nāgsen's birth and education i.e. Kāṅinī- Ajāl Jaṅgalwāṛ and Nāgsenī.

Nāgsen's activities pertain to the valleys of Kaśṭwāṛ Poonch and Rājouri is quite evident from numerous other indirect evidences and references about the Himālayan character of the country of his birth. For example Yugāndhār, where the assembly of the elders of the order is said to have been held, carries the common Himālayan tradition of assigning such names to the mountain pastures[5]. Dhār is a common suffix in the place names for these high mountains pastures in the valley of Chinab, in the Jammu hill region.

There is a popular tradition, possibly pretty old, as enumerated by Dr. Tarn[6] and Dr. Narain[7] on the authority of G.Gaces[8] which connects the origin of a most famous statue of Buddha, made of Emerald, with

Menānder. According to this tradition, the famous statue of Buddha had been fashioned out from a magic stone by Menānder's teacher Nāg Sen by his super natural powers. This popular tradition of Indo-China (Vietnām) can have a Geographical and Scientific basis also. The famous saphire mines of Paḍār, though officialy stands discovered only in last century, were known to the local inhabitants earlier also. This mine near Machel and Chashotī is close to the Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ, and there is no wonder if some disciple or devotee of Nāgsen may have presented the big Greenish Gem-stone to the teacher, who as per tradition through his super natural power, or through the agency of King Menānder got it fashioned by some skilled craftsman into the aforesaid famous statue.

Again, an ancient Buddha monastery (Gumpā) with rich Buddhist literature (in manuscript form) is still lying in a village Haloti Chasotī close to the famous Saphire mines of Kaśṭwāṛ.

C) *Archaeological Evidence*: There are many archeological sites pertaining to the ancient and medieval period which reflect the richness of the antiquity and culture of the mountain valleys of Chināb in Jammu, especially that of Kaśṭwāṛ. In Jammu mountain region we have at least three Brahmī inscription sites pertaining to the times in question. According to Dr.Vasudev Sharan Aggarwal, a great Archaeologist and scholar of ancient Indian history, Kaśṭwāṛ must occupy a very important place in the cultural history of Jammu region and therefore of India. According to his observations he had the literary evidence for his convictions which must correspond with and supported by desired archeological data. He believed that certain portion of Vedas must have been composed in the Valleys of Chināb in Kaśṭwāṛ Some ten caves have been located in this region which appear to be the abodes of saints, hermits and recluse. We have identified in the second chapter of this monograph the important Archeological sites of Sai Draman and Demzī near Bhāttaṇ village connected with Tapsvī Assāgutthị and his Vattanīya hermitage in Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ. A detailed account of all such monuments and ancient sites, related with Nāgsen in one way or the other form is being given separately in the next chapter of this book.

D) *Numismatic Evidence*: According to Rhy Davids twenty two different (types of) coins, some of them in considerable number bearing the name (of Menānder) and eight of them with the bust of Menānder have been found. One of them has been found in Kashmir. It depicts the bust of the King wearing a crested Helmet. Bhikśu Jagdish Kashyap in his Hindi edition of *Milind Panho* also records that "upto this time we have discovered twenty two coins of Milind from Kābul to Mathurā, which indicates the vastness of his empire. The coin depicts the figure of Milinda clearly on eight coins. In some he is quite young and in some he is quite old which means he reigned for quite a long time. The language on two sides is Pāli and Greek.[11]

The list of coins prepared by G.B Bleazby Esq. from the Valley (Kashmir) include 15 silver coins of Menānder which are similar to the coins preserved in British Museum. They seem to have been collected by the late Accountant General of the J&K State from some where in Shupiān, though Fidda Hussain mentions them as collected from Lolāb.[12] Menānder being the name of a village near Shupiān on the traditional ancient route through Toshmaidān, the coins must belong to this area.

Again some of these coins are said to contain the figures of running horses, camels, elephants, bear or a Chakra. The coin with a Chakra (symbolic of Bodh

Dham Chakra) confirms to some extent that King Menānder had accepted Buddhism. The other side of the coin contains the word " Basileos Dikaiou Manendrou (महरजस धार्मिकस मनेन्द्रस). In Buddhist literature a King devoted to Buddhism is always called as Dham Rāj and therefore the term Dikaiou (धार्मिकस्य) on the coin confirms the influence of Buddhism on the King.[13]

E) *Ethenic Evidence*: "Sen" is a sub-caste name of many people only of Kaśṭwāṛ probably in the whole of J&K State. Mahāsen and Nāgsen are the chief characters of *Milind Panho*.

Again the Himālayan valleys formed by tributaries of Chandrabhāgā in Kaśṭwāṛ and Rājouri Poonch have much in comman in the ethnic and cultural aspects. Scores of place and caste names in the valleys of Bhales and Girgān have a common suffixal nomenclature[14] such as:-

Rajouri	*Bhales*
Girgāṇ)	Kilhotrāṇ - Places
Doḍriāṇ)	Erwāṇ (Kathuā)
Khiāṇ) Places	Deḍhāṇ)
Khulwāṇ)	Sagāṇ) castes
Knalwāṇ)	Thamāṇ)
Hussāṇ)	Khakhāṇ)
Kapran	Keśwān (Kaśṭwāṛ)
Terwān	Peswān do
Rattan Dev	Rattan Dev do

and the term ATHARWĀN of *Rigveda* used for a priest also supports the same idea.

F) *Linguistic Evidence*: *Milind Panho* is stated to have been first written in Pāli / Kashmiri and then translated into various other languages i.e. Chinese, Simhalese and in 1880 and 1890 into English by V. Treckner and

Rys Davids. This Kashmiri or Pāli of ancient times or early medieval times is still much nearer to the Kaśṭwāṛi and Kashmīrī of today. A study of various places and person names and words recorded in *Milind Panho* clearly support this contention. For example we have the names of persons as Sônutur and Assāgutth̤ which are nearer to Kaśṭwāṛī/Kashmirī nomenclature, and phonetics. Names such as Kañjaṅgal, Vijamvothu, Vattanīya etc. are also nearer to phonetic peculiarities of the local dialect i.e. occurrence of closed vowels and predominance of "th" phone of Kaśṭwāṛi dialect. The term Bhatt stands for a Pandit in Kashmiri. Even today a Pandit in Kashmiri is called by the general term Buttā. A lot of village names in Kaśṭwāṛ either start or end with the term Bhāttā, such as Nāgan Bhāttā, Pullar Bhāttā, Sangrām Bhāttā, etc. depicting them as the abodes of Pandits or learned Brahmins. Again "Yār" or "ār" (like Kashmirī) is a common suffix of the Kaśṭwāṛī place names, such as Padyār/n (Bhatta Yāra) Badiār (Bad + Yar).

Again the Pālī inscription on the other side of Menānder's coin is very close to the Kaśṭwaṛī / Kashmīri i.e. on 21 coins: महरजस तद्रतस मनेन्द्रस

on 22nd coins: महरजस धार्मिकस्य मनेन्द्रस

G) *Religious Evidence*: Nāgsenī and other side valley in the Himālyan mountain ranges of Chināb and Jammu Hills had been sacred land of Vedās, Holy land of Buddhists, and pious land of Brahmanic period, is borne out by many facts pertaining to the regions. In Nāgsenī area alone most of the local agriculture and forest produce are considered pious and sacred and taken only, on religious fastings and festivities, in the whole of the surrounding country. Some of these are as under:

a) ***Sacred Crops*** **:**

1) *Siūl:* a kind of white mustard like grain. On a fasting day it is roasted and consumed with milk or curd.

ii) *Phulan:* Extensive crop of this grain is cultivated in the hill region and Nāgsenī valley during summer months. Its flour is used for making bread.

iii) *Bajarbhaṅg* is another small grainy crop of the region, extensively cultivated and after sorting out the husk from it, is cooked like rice or khīr, which is very tasty and entertaining.

iv) *Drov* is another kind of phulan, somewhat superior in quality. Plate XV.

v) *Chini* or *Anav* is a small ricey grain like crop, whitish in colour, cooked like rice, or with milk as khīr, and eaten on fasting days and religious festivity.

vi) *Kodrā* is yet another small ricy grain which is used as a stable food as well as for making traditional, alcoholic beverage, by the folk people. It is curious and interesting to note that consumption of one or other kind of beverage, in daily life or on special religious occasions, is a part of life style of the high landers in the entire Himālayan region, right from the ancient times. It may be Somras or Chhang; it may be vedic times, Buddhist period, Śaivism or revived Hinduism of Gupta age and style, use of beverage was a part of the Indian mountain religion. Kodrā forms the basic ingredient for making such drinks.

b) *Wild fruits* : Many types of wild fruits are also available in mountain valleys of Chināb which are not only abundant but tasty and nutritious, also:

i) *Zom* is a kind of sweet but dark brownish wild grapes, very tasty and nutritious, found in the Naigad valley of Nāgsenī.

ii) *Kulāñch* is again a small juicy, herby wild fruit extensively found on these slopes, sweet as well as nutritious.

iii) *Thānkī* a wild jungle nut found on high altitude mountain slopes.

iv) wild walnuts are also extensively found in the region.

v) *Niozei* is a fine tasty nutritive needle shaped high altitude, pine fruit found in Pāḍar region of Kaśṭwāṛ close to the Nāgsenī valley.

Most of these grains and fruits are eaten by the people on the days of fastings only, probably because of their being considered sacred as they grow in the sacred land of Nāgsen.

c) *Sacred Trees*: Certain trees are also considered to be most sacred in this region. One such tree is the Brahmā tree.

It is found in the whole of the Nāgsenī valley. It is planted at the time of a good deed, and is usually found near a water spring or a shrine. In no case is it damaged or cut. On the day of full dark moon night, it is offered Dhūpa or other incadscent.

In addition to the above named sacred trees, others whose products are used for cleansing purposes are:-

Gug: a kind of "surf" tree whose fruits are used for washing of clothes. In plains it is probably known by the name of Reiṭhā.

Krains : a similar jungle product used for the same purpose.

Thus the above religious base for considering the Bhadarwāh- Kaśṭwāṛ - Shupiān - Poonch Himālayan mountain belt as the sacred land of composition of Vedas, and Buddhist Holy land, and abode of saintly men, is confirmed. Other supportive evidence in this respect is as under:-

a) Nagsen is said to have learnt three Vedas from his father and later become Philogist and Grammarian. There is every probability of Kaśṭwāṛś mountain region and Chandrabhāgā and its side valleys being the abode of learned Brahmins, who probably composed, learnt, mastered and preserved the Vedas. Many places in the upper Chināb Valley of Pāngī, Bhales, Maṛwā and Banihāl still preserve the place names indicating these as abodes of certain Rishis, saints or seers, such as:-

i) Rikinwās; Rishi + Niwās (Dachan Maṛwā)

ii) Chamalwās; Chamal + Wās (Banihāl)

iii) Alwās; Alv + Wās (Pāḍar-Paṇgi)

iv) Darwās; Darv + Wās (do)

v) Jakyās; Jakya + Wās (Bhales)
or Yakya +Wās

vi) Bhatyās; Bhat + Wās (do)

vii) Malwās; Malv + Wās (Doda)

Even the small side valley of Bhadarwāh, drained by Chināb's tributary NERŪ which is known for its beauty, has been recorded by the name of Bhadrāvakāsh, Bhadrāshram and Bhadrakāshī.

Again the Śukā is mentioned to have addressed the assembly of the order, on the summit of Yugāndhar which reveals the sacredness and religious potential of the Himālayas of this region, especially when Śukā is taken as Devādhipatī, a *Milind Panho* innovation.

As per *Milind Panho,* Nāgsen had learnt from his father all the three Vedas and was well versed in Vedic lore, which means vedic knowledge had been a household affair for the local Brahmin population of the region, and therefore lends further support to the hypothesis.

b) Not only did Kaśṭwāṛ provide religous teachers to Kashmir and North Western India, in Buddhist times, in the person of Nāgsen, but in later periods also this *Himālayan* tradition of imparting religious teaching continued in the form of some Muslim Saints and Pīrs having moved into the land of Nāgsen and then gone to Kashmir as religious teachers. We find a small cave at Bhandārkot just near the bridge over Chināb.

Sheikh Zain-ul-din Walī of Palmāṛ in Kaśṭwāṛ, before moving to Aishmukām in Kashmir, is stated to have stayed here for many years. He was a principal disciple of Sheikh Nur-ud-din Sahib Walī, patron saint of Kashmir who's ancestors too belonged to Kaśṭwāṛ, probably from Sarthal- Kāñiṇī Ajāl and birth place of Nāgsen,(Kāñiṇī Ajāl). A Shārdā inscription lies in the cave spring, on the left bank of Chandrabhāgā, just opposite the first cave.

c) Sanskritised nomenclature of local places all along the Chandrabhāgā river and its tributaries in Jammu hills again indicates that the above region had been a seat of ancient Indian school of learning. To quote some of such names of Kaśṭwāṛ - Poonch region we may mention them as under:-

Nāgsenī, Kaśṭwāṛ Kāñiṇī, Brahmśilā, (Barśila), Drabśālā, Shīvā, Sirāj, Khaśālya, Himtā (Hiuta - Chanenī - Himavant) Buddhpur (Udhampur) Rāmban, Rāmsu, Chandarkot, Maitreyā, Deśā, Rājgaṛh, Rudradhār (Rudhār), Sudh Mahā Dev, Hastī, Bindrāban (Kaśṭwāṛ), Bhadravakāsh, Kaplas (mountain named after the Kuśān King Kadphises I or IInd (15-75 A.D.), Rājāpuri (Rajouri) Surankot, Chandimaṛh, Singh Dwār (Shāh - Derā), and many others. All such names also prove the Sanskritised antiquity of the places as well as persons of the region.

d) One of the interesting co-incidental evidence and co-occurence of events in the region of Nāgsen-

Menānder episode is , that many traditions, religious observations and monuments in the Kaśṭwāṛ and Poonch valleys, the two main Himālayan regions connected with him, are almost similar in certain aspects. The monuments (temples) at Sāi Draman and Rāmkund (Plates IV & XXXII) are broadly same in shape and size. The Chaitrā Chaudashī (the fourteenth day of Lunar Bright Moon) is celebrated and considered sacred for taking Holy bath both at Rāmkund and Dodā, i.e. Sangam of Neru and Chandrabhāgā rivers. The tradition and story attributed to Pir Chotā Shāh of Sakhī Maidān in Mendhar and Pir Farid-ud-din in Kaśṭwāṛ is, broadly speaking, similar in narration, contents, and time of occurence. The elderly or spiritualy enlightened persons of the later times seem to have utilized the spiritual sanctity of these places to awaken themselves to be capable to bring political and social reforms in the overall degenerated life of the people of the region, or in other words we may say, that the spirit of aggression of foreign invaders of India, being defeated spiritually as in the Nāgsen -Menānder episode, later restored to a silent invasion, in the shape, form and person of Pirs, Faqirs and saints as shall we see in the following pages, to acquire all the meta-physical or spiritual power, from these places of ancient sanctity, probably for propagation of their own faiths.

Cultural Evidence: An interesting socio-cultural evidence indicating the Greeko- Bactrian influence on the subjects of their domain is available from an interesting custom prevalent among the Hindus as well as Mohammedan residents in certain regions of the land. We know that Menānder had married Agathocleia, his first cousin sister. This custom is not ordinarily prevalent amongst the Hindus of the land . However the custom of marrying cousin sisters can be seen amongst Hindus also (Thākur and Brahmin communities only) of certain areas of Gujrāt, Rajāsthān, Kathiāwāṛ as also around the land of birth of Nāgsen i.e. Bhaderwāh, Bhales and Pāḍar etc. The same custom seems to have been practised in the land of Menānder's home Kingdom (Sindhu- Sauvīrā) as indicated by the popular Sanskrit Ślokā (now out of my memory) which reads something like

पूर्वे ....? पश्चिमे ....?
उत्तरे मांस भोजनं दक्षिणे मातुला कन्या ।

and which indicates that the custom might have travelled Northwards from the southern country of Menānder's domain i.e. Sindh. The custom became so predominantly prevalent in the Himālayan Valley of Chināb, that from the very childhood, the boy or the girl in question was in the know of his or her probable future life companion. I still remember one interesting event of my school days at Bhadarwāh when two of my classmates, both first cousin quarrelled over a trifle and the one in a taunting voice shouted at the other "Oh you, my child (Bāichu)? You dare to quarrel with me ? Have I not to marry your sister?" And the other fellow had nothing to say but to swallow the insult. The custom seems to be the direct influence of Greeko-Kuśāṇa ethinic culture, the remnants of which can still be traced from the Himālayan Valleys, and which forms the matter of another research paper.

The main villages of the Nāgseni region of Kaśṭwāṛ and the guarded alopes of *Milind Panho* are as under:-

1. Cherjī
2. Ārchī
3. Poller
4. Chichhā
5. Tyālan
6. Dichalā
7. Wulay
8. Galhār
9. Naigaḍ
10. Sīrī

11. Demzī
12. Bhātan
13. Bhiṛā
14. Chandanānā
15. Paḍyārnā
16. Kwāṛ
17. Charol
18. Thumnei
19 Dul
20. Sumanei
21. Ghoṛnei
22. Siāh
23. Bāgnā.

All this should provide a sufficient convincing evidence to prove that the valley of Chandrabhāgā is not only rich in the field of antiquity, but is also the land of birth, education and meditation of one of the greatest sons of India, named Nāgsen, who like Buddha, without uttering even a single harsh word or abuse to anyone, silenced these foreign messengers of death and destruction, removed their biting teeth and made them humble, accommodating and peace loving citizens for centuries to come.

And the presumption of some unknown Kashmiri writer of Daily Mārtanḍ article, years ago, and the strong conviction of D. Vāsudev Sharan Aggarwal about the richness of antiquity of Kaśṭwāṛ region, now seems to have come true to some extent by surveying, locating, indentification and evaluation of the Nāgsenī region of Kaśṭwāṛ as the place of birth and meditation of one of the greatest philosopher, thinker and saints of his time and probably some other Buddhists, as well as Hindu saints and hermits. of the region, which needs further investigations and continued research.

Footnotes :

1. A.I. p.297.
2. K.T.A. p.24.
"Ashoka (273-236 B.C) exterminated Malechās root and branch. However the state religion did not draw to itself many followers from the populace, as the land was under the sway of learned Brahmins, who's fame for scholarship in Sanskrit lore had travelled to distant parts of Hindustan, Tibet , Chinā,Jāvā, and Jāpān. Low caste Hindus alone presumably adopted the new faith".
3. Fidda Mohmmad P.114 In Buddhist Kashmir recods:- Buddhist suffered untold miseries during the reign of Abhimanyu, who gave patronage to Śaivism. Buddhist were forced to renounce their religion or face anihilation. Under such circumstances many a Buddhist ran away from the Valley.
3. M.P. Treck. 1/1/3
4. Ibid X / IV-V
5. Such as Sibār-Dhār, Rudhar, Seoj Dhār, Nāglotan, Dhār, Kanṭhi-Kaṭar Dhār, Gadiāni Dhār etc. etc.
6. G.B.I. p. 267-68.
7. I.G. p. 98.
8. Bulletin de 1' Ecole francaise d' extreme orient B.E.F. ED. XXV 1925 p.112 XXX 193 p. 448.
c.f. N.W.I. 207. f.n. 17.
9. D.E.
10. R.C. KaK. *A handbook of coins of Kashmir*, p. 129
11. M.P. Bhik. P. 6-7.
12. The Valley of Lolāb also lay on the traditional route from Kashmir to N.W. frontier, the Domain of Menānder.
13. M.P. Bhik. p.6
14. This "An"suffix seems to mean "son of " or "coming from". According to Pāniṇī Sūtra (IV. 1.117) suffix "अण" is used for a son or descendent. c.f. N.W.I P. 146 f.n.8.
15. B.K. Fidda. P.

CHAPTER IV

CONNECTED MONUMENTS, SITES AND THEIR ARCHAEOLOGICAL DETAILS

The greatest achievements of ancient Indian civilization and culture was, probably its rich tradition of spirtual superiority which by the time of beginning of Gupta period had started to indicate the signs of decline and degeneration.

While Vedic India was country of nature worshipers, Upanishdas indicated a changed environment of pursuits for philosophy and intellectualism, Buddhism and Jainism stood for equality among different sections of people, tolerance, mutual love, cooperation, and coordination, Purānic Hinduism patronised by Guptas, based on mythical faiths and traditions proved to be the root cause of Indian religious and spiritual degeneration.

It is interesting to note that in many cases the armed attack of Indian soil by a foreigner was preceded by the visit of some saintly persons or some foreign spiritualist to the sites and monuments associated with some Rishi, Muni, saint, hermit, Yogi, Yatī[1] or Satī.[2] But whenever an Indian intellectual gaint or spiritualist retaliated, the foreigner had to face defeat and humiliation.

We have already seen that Nāgsen not only silenced Menānder but also converted him to Buddhism to such a stage of firmness that he is said to have later become a Bhikśu and attained Arhatship. In the times that followed we see complete shattering of his empire and liquidation of Greeko- Bactrian invasion at the hands of Śakas.

If we study the history of religious transformations and change in faiths in India, with special reference to the tract of land under study we find that scores of Pīrs, Faqīrs, saints and other pious men had started to pour in at the places of spirtual sanctity, temples, hermitages and other monuments, from the West. Every city, town or village in Panjāb and its adjoining territory is still seen to preserve one or more Ziārats or Mazārs of some particular Pīr or elderly Faqir, who in addition to the preaching of love and brotherhood among different sections of people also preached their own faith and religion. Kaśṭwāṛ, Rājourī, Poonch and Udhampur districts in Jammu also have a rich ancient tradition of Hindu saints and their hermitages followed by Pīrs and, Faqirs of the later medieval times. Many locations in the mountain valleys drained by Chināb and its tributaries seems to have been places of religious activity and spiritual merit, right from ancient times to the present day. In the following pages an attempt is being made to draw an informative sketch of some of these places of spiritualistic interest, of the ancient and medieval times from the available sources.

Nāgsenī or the Land of Nāg Sen:

In *Milīnd Panho* it has been stated that Nāgsen was born in the Brahmin village of Kañjaṅgal situated in the Himalayās, in the extreme east of Buddhist holy land. Now if we study the geographical features of the land tract around the valley of Nāgsenī, we come across gorgeous and slopy region only lying between the present villages of Kāniṇī and Jaṅgalwāṛ (on the present Batote Kaśṭwāṛ National Highway) which can be associated with the birth place of Nāgsen, on the following reasons:-

1. Some of the villages of the belt, such as Barshilā Sarthal and Panditgām (Kaśṭwāṛ) are still predominantly Brahmin villages.
2. The village name Kañjañgal, the birth place of Nāgsen is the abbreviated form of the village names of Kāniṇī (Kāndinī) and Jañgalwār, a region of difficult accessibility in those days, and therefore termed as guarded slopes.
3. It is really situated to the extreme limit of Holy Buddhist land, which in those ancient days included valley of Kashmir and all the Himālayan mountain valleys surrounding it especially those falling in the middle mountain range of Pīr Panchāl range on the South East of Himālayās.

Nāgsen seems to have been born in the Pandit village of Kaśṭwāṛ (Kāniṇī, Jangalwāṛ belt) and late moved to village Chhihhā (Vijamvothu) and Bhāttan (Vattaniya hermitage) for learning and meditation. In addition to various facts as stated in Chapter III, additional evidence which proves the antiquity of this region are as under:-

i) The region is located on the traditional ancient mountain route from Kāngṛā to Kashmir and was quite familiar with the ancient and medieval, political and religious personalities, travelling through this mountain route.

ii) There is a mini cave temple, containing three Shiv liñgam, on the right bank of Chandrabhāgā river near Kāndoth. On examining its location, form and structure the place seems to be a traditional ancient mini-cave shrine associated with Pāndavas.

iii) Numerous Megāliths belonging to both ancient and medieval times can still be noticed in the slopy hutments of Kaśṭwāṛ Jañgalwāṛ region. Those found at Bhellā, Kañḍot and Kaśṭwāṛ belong to 1st to 5 th century A.D.

1v) Ruins of a small fort exist on a small hillock at Bhellā Kānḍot and as per tradition the fort was built by some Chinese invader who could be none else but the Chinese appearing Hun Chief Mihirkul or any of his chieftain.[3]

v) Kāniṇī or Kāndiṇī is a small beautiful spot at the foot of Sarthal Devi shrine, on the left bank of Chandrabhāgā river. There is a folk song in Bhadarwāhī dialect depicting the sacrifice of Rānī of Kāniṇi (Kandiṇī) for the welfare of village folk, similar to one that of Rāni Shārdā of Chambā.[4] A few miles further up towards Kaśṭwāṛ, we have a place named Hastī (i.e. Elephant) which reminds us of the Chinese version of the birth story of Nāgsen, according to which Nāgsen was named so because at the time of his birth, a calf also was born to an elephant. In Sanskrit an elephant is known by the term Nāg also. The Hastī slopes of Kaśtwāṛ are at a distance of only few miles from Kāniṇī and must have something to co-relate with Nagsen, and his birth place.

vi) The Chinese version of *Milind Panho* also mentions Rohan residing at Vijjamvothu (Chhichhā) and as Maternal uncle of Nāgsen, which again makes one to believe that Nāgsen was born in some village of Kaniṇī - Jangalwāṛ belt, his mother belonged to Chichā belt and his education and meditation must have been carried out in Chichhā- Bhāttan- Demzī region.

vii) The Chief of Kanḍā (Bhellā- Kānḍot) principality in Kaśṭwāṛ, named Gabhir Singh (probably a Rānā) is recorded to have taken part in the assembly of hill

Chiefs called by Kalśā, the King of Kashmir in 1886 A.D, in which Rājā of Kaśṭwāṛ and Chamba also took part.[5]

All these things indicate the richness of the antiquity of the region. The sites and monuments connected with Nāgsen in Kaśṭwāṛ and Poonch are as follows:-

A) *Sarthal* is said to have derived its nomenclature from Shri Sthal called so because of the sacred shrine of Devi Shārika, which as per tradition and religious belief came there from Kashmir, only five or six centuries earlier but the cluster of villages of Kāniṅī in Sarthal seems to be quite old. Kāniṅī (presently called Kandinī) is some 53 miles away from Batote and from here the village Ajāl near Sarthal is seven miles up. The village is inhabited by Brahmins, and the place is a over-hanging valley at the foot of dense Deodār forest with a small hutment. The location and inhabitance is an ancient one. Now this Kāniṅī-Ajāl slopy hutment can be one of the possible precise location as a place of birth of Nāgsen. The term Kañjaṅgal is derived from Kāninī and Ajāl. Some people use the term Ajār for Agār. It is presently considered one of the most sacred places of the region because of the presence of shrine of Devi Shārikā.[6]

The place is nearer to Nāgsenī and more easily accessible from Kaśṭwāṛ) and Kashmir, from where the fine statute of Goddess Shārikā is said to have been brought at a much later date. According to J.N. Ganhar the image has come here over five and half centuries ago. Sutan Sikander popularly known as Sikander the Iconoclast (1389 - 1413 A.D.) was the ruler of Kashmir then. Under the influence of religious teachers from outside Kashmir he took delight in demolishing Hindu places of worship and destroying the sacred images therein.[7] The Shārikā temple at Hāri Parbat might have also faced an imminent threat from him and hence the image brought to the guarded slopes of Kāniṇī-Ajāl the place of birth of Nāgsen.

B) *Barshilā* is a small predominantly Brahmin village on the right bank of Chinab. Just across it on the left bank of the river can be located the villages of Hastī, Kāniṇī[8], Sarthal , Ajāl, Kanḍot[9], Bhellā, Ṭhaṭhri and Jañgalwār[10]. The place name Barshilā is said to have been derived from Bramshilā. The nomenclature being associated with Brahmā, the creator of the universe, has already been noticed with certain specific mountain peaks of the region and also with a particular kind of tree as seen earlier. The place Barshilā associated with Brahmā must therefore have something of an antiquitarian interest and importance. It may be yet another probable village of Nāg Sen's birth.

C) *Sai Draman* : The most important place connected with the Nāgsen's education and learning in Nāgsenī region of Kaśtwāṛ is the one where Nāgsen's preceptor, Gurū and well wisher Assāguttḥ used to convene the assembly of the Buddhist order, elders and learned men. The place is called even today by the name Siāh or "Sai" Draman, derived I believe from Assāguttḥ. The place is located about a dozen miles away on the traditional pedestrian route from Kaśtwāṛ to Pāḍar, or some one mile up from Padyārṇā on the present Kaśtwāṛ Pāḍar motorable road. An important archaeological site still exists at the place, which consists of three stone temples, and confirms the religious nature and sanctity of the place. The place, in the time of Nāgsen must have been, the centre of religious activity discourses and assembly of elders. The archaeological remains today at the site consist of three ruined stone temple structures, once marvelously built in this remote Himālayan mountain valley. These probably belong to any time between 8th century A.D. to 12 century as indicated by a Shārdā inscription-bearing slab 1'x 3' inscribed in the left wall of the main temple structure. The archaeological site had been hitherto undiscovered by any individual or agency. This temple structure has a lot of similarities to the temple structure at Rāmkund in Mendhar Poonch, and Pāndrethān in Kashmir. All the three temple structures at Sāi Draman are made of chiselled stone-slabs and are facing east. Two of them are adjacent to each other, whereas the third one almost completely in ruins, is some forty feet away southward on the hill top ground (Draman).

*Structure No.*1 is some '8x8' at the base with almost the same height. The arch beam of the gate has a carved statue of Ganesha, now almost weathered, and partially recognisable. The temple is rectangular in shape with a few stairs. No other particular feature of this temple structure, presently a heap of stone rubble, is worth mentioning.

*The temple No.*2 at the site (Plate v) is almost completely ruined except its base, some three feet elevated from the ground. Some portions of it seem to be buried as seen from the picture. Two carved lions (Siṁhās) decorate the eastern side of the base arch. No further details can be recorded in the absence of proper excavations, and identifications.

The third temple structure, though partly damaged still maintains some recognizable appearance. It is rectangular in shape, a stone work, probably 8x6 in size. The triangular arch above the gate has a carved panel decorated on both sides with images probably of Gangā and Yamunā (Plate IV) and so is the case with its pyramidical or conical roofing. A carved statue of

Ganesha is situated just below it, and above the entrance to the temple.

A stone slab measuring 1′x3′with early Shārdā inscription is inscribed in the left wall of this temple. If deciphered it could prove to be a big source of positive information regarding the antiquity of the place for the medieval periods. The exploration, evolution and its preservation is therefore of urgent importance.

Following statues in damaged condition still existed inside this temple structure when I visited the site in July 1991.

i) Shiv Pārvatī or Vishnū and Lakshmī in white stone (Plate XI).

ii) Vishnu or Śiva in black stone.

iii) Garuḍa in greystone (Plate X)

iv) Few other statues in fragments which could not be recognised.

v) A fine Ashat Kamal carving on the ceiling.

vi) All components of the temple i.e. walls, flooring, ceiling, roofing and doors comprise of stone slabs only.

vii) Many fragments of carved stones are scattered every where all over the temple premises which is about 100′ x 100′ dimensions and located on the Siāh hill top.

viii) Some long, thin, oily Deodar, wood pieces, usually used in the hill country as torches for dark night travellares, were also lying inside the temple sanctum, offered as I suppose by village folk as symbol of lamps.

ix) Remanants of a stone boundary wall can also be seen and some pieces of charcoal were also obsered there, reminding one, of the seasonal observance of some kind of festivity by the village folk of the region.

D) *Bhāttan*: Whereas Siāh of Sāi Draman had been the place of religious discourses and assembly of the elders under Hermit Assāgutth̩, village Bhāttan just 3 miles away must have been the site of his residential hutment. The name Bhāttan of the village is still preserved as an alteration of the term Vattanīyaś hermitage as recorded in *Milind Panho*. Though no archaeological site or monument around the village could be traced during the course of my short visit to the site, yet there should be no disappointment on that account, as great men of saintly nature of ancient India were usually in the habit of leading a very simple life. However the site of Assāgutth̩'s residential hutment should be located somewhere near the present damaged wooden temple structure of the village.

E) *Demzī* : The term Demzī, as stated earlier seems to be a name derived from Pālī word Tapsī, or Sanskrit word Tapasvī meaning a meditator. This village in the Nāigad Valley of Nāgsenī region has an extremely charming location at the foot of Nāgīsherū or Haround mountain in the North East of Kaśṭwāṛ. It is some three miles above the traditional route from Kaśṭwāṛ to Pāḍar and five miles up from Padyārnā on the present motorable road from Kaśṭwāṛ to Pāḍar. The height of the location is some 7000 feet. The climate in the summer is very pleasant. In the morning and evening hours the shining glitter of the Brahmā peak, just across the Chandrabhāgā Gorge is quite enchanting. The location is surrounded by a cluster of small villages namely Chandnānā some two and a half miles away, Gordash Nāg, some one and half miles away and Bhāttan the residence of Assāgutth̩ some a half mile away.

We have already seen that Assāgutth̩ was not only the Chief of order, but also a saint of highest merit and therefore it is self evident that his place of deep meditation, must have been away from his residence at Bhāttan, and place of religious discussions and discourses at Siāh Draman. This place is to be located near Demzī where the ruins of a temple structure, probably constructed later at the site of earlier Stūpa of Assāgutth̤ still exist (Plate XV and XIII). The place has a great sanctity, natural charm, purity and calmness. Even in winter months, the place enjoys a warm sunshine for a greater part of the day. A dense and beautiful Deodar forest lies on the upper slopes of the mountain, covering all the aforesaid villages of the region.

Demzī had been the seat of deep meditation for a saintly person like assāgutth̤ is proved by:-

a) The existing remnants of medieval temple containing fragments of carvings, statuary, fountain stone and 24 petalled lotus (Plate XIV).

b) Presence of a Brahmā tree.

c) Remnants of a probable small Bodh stūpa dedicated to Assāghtth̤.

d) A boundary wall of dry stone masonary.

The stone fountain consists of a big stone slab moderately carved, the water to which must have been channelled from some adjoining source. The weathered stone statue of Vishnu (Plate XIV), a Trimurtī, the right hand face being that of lion, with its foot resting on Prithvī indicate that it should be that of Vaikunthanātha. Two small figures, probably those of Dikpālas, with deity's hands resting on their heads adore the statue on both sides. The 24 petaled lotus may have been the pedestal for a Shivalingām, as the carved panel on stone also indicates the carvings of Ganesh in the centre of the panel and Nandī on one of the undamaged side.

The above sites of Buddhist Kaśṭwāṛ (alongwith Buddhist Poonch-Rājourī) were subjected to enforced religious transformation by the later Brahmanism and still later by Mohamdanism. We find some interesting traditions pertaining to certain saints and Faquirs in Kaśṭwāṛ, and Poonch area as indicated in the last chapter.

On the left bank of Chināb at Bhandārkot there is a cave shrine and a spring with a small inscription in Shārdā still undeciphered. According to Gulam Mustafa Ishrat the inscription carries some Buddhist message.

Whereas Kaśtwāṛ has been the place of birth and education of Nāgsen, Mendhar, in Poonch probably was the centre from where he continued his religious and spiritual activities in his later life. The valleys of Rājourī and Poonch also have a rich tradition of saints and hermits, later followed by Pīrs and Faqīrs. The archeological site of Sakhi-Maidān or Pāndav temples, the miraculous vihāra at Parṇotsva (Poonch) indicates that the whole region in general and the Mendhar-Poonch in particular had remained a place of great Buddhist interest and activity and the testimony and proof thereof is provided in the following archeological sites of the region.

F) *Rāmkund:* is an archeological site in Mendhar valley of Poonch District of Jammu region. The location comprises of a mini pocket valley called by the name of Narol Topā. It is a very beautiful spot (PlateXXX). A gushing fresh water spring, a gently descending slopy water shed and a plate type hillock called by the name of Dhūn Topā or Māchigaṛh lies on its North and Eastern sides. The site is some 5 miles away from Mendhar town and some 2 miles away from Sakhī Maidān, the site of an ancient Vihāra and the present ruins of a medieval temple. A lot of tradition and folk belief are associated with Rāmkund temple site as well as with the great Archeological site of Sakhī Maidān which provide very valuable information regarding the antiquity of the region, as well as existence of some ancient hermitage at the temple site, most probably Sānkhey Hermitage of Āyū Pāl of *Milind Panho* named after "Śākya Muni Buddha, where the elder of the hermitage Āyū Pāl resided around 150 B.C. and where Nāgsen on his way to Śākalā stayed and encountered King Menānder.

As per local belief Panḍavās during the Mahābhārta time came and stayed here for some time. Later some important hermits made this place as their hermitage. King Menānder or his son Starto I later seems to have constructed a small stūpa at the site and decorated it with the gold image of Buddha, which as per Rājataranginịi[11], had later been excavated by King Lalitā Ditya and taken away by his minister Caṇkuna to Kashmir, where he installed it in a Chaitya, probably at Parihāspur. Lalitā Ditya seems to have constructed the present temple structures at Rāmkund,from where he obtained two Keśavā statues, with inscription on the base, stating them to be made by Rāma and Lakshmna[12]. The king accordingly seems to have named the place as Rāmkund towards the middle of 8th century A.D. Later these statues were taken away by the king to Kashmir. One of those was installed by him in a temple and the other by his Queen.

Still later, after some eight centuries more passed, another incidence seem to have occurred not at the venue of hidden pocket valley of Ramkund, but close to the Lalitā Dityas temples/ Vihāra at Sakhī Maidān, which gave rise to the establishment of a Ziārat of Chotai Shāh or Sheru Shāh and where now a mosque is being constructed. The style, shape and architectural structure of the Rāmkumd temple at Narol in Mendhar can fairly be compared, with temple of the same age of Kashmir or elsewhere in the region, namely Parihāspur and Pāndrethān in Kashmir and Sāi Draman in Nāgsenī Kaśṭwāṛ. The entire temple and spring structure of this shrine is made of stone slabs and is still extant. It seems to have escaped the wrath of aggressive and intolerant rulers of the times, only because of its unnoticeable location in the pocket valley of Narol at the foot of Shāh Sitār range. Even the credit for its present tracing out goes to some Indian army officer, who while expelling the Pakistanī invaders in 1948 from the region, noticed the site and brought it to the notice of others as well as outsiders. The temple presently does not possess any sculpture pertaining to the time of its construction, nor any fragment of it is found from the site. The walls are now roughly plastered with cement, probably by the temple Pujārī or some other devotee, and consequently the details regarding panels and carvings are lacking. The temple faces east, and its stairs lead down to three springs (Plate XXXII). These have been constructed from sand stone locally available and named after the legendary Rāma, Sītā and Laxmana. The temple walls, floor, roofing and stairs, all comprise of the same material. These stone blocks or slabs are some times as big as 7′. The dimension of the temple is some 8′x8′x20′.

In ancient and the medieval periods, the importance of the place seems to be immense. Presently no Hindu family is residing there because of the border location of the area with Pakistan. The entire land of the Dhūn Shāh Sitar range measuring some 650 kanals, both cultivable and non-cultivable is the property of the shrine. It is said that prior to 1948 some 40 families of

Muslim Jajwān[13] Rājput converts and few Khakhars inhabited the adjoining villages who migrated to Pakistan at the time of Pakistani raid. The region is now being mostly inhabited by Gujjars. A fair on 14th luminous day of Chaitra (Chaitra Chaturdashī) is held at the place every year, when many devotees from the adjoining region gather there.

Sakhī Maidān:

Some five miles away from the present township of Mendar, the Sakhimaidān site is really like a playground or a table land slightly elevated from the Mendhar rivulet.There are two archaeological locations presently available at the site, the one shrine of Sheru Shāh or Chotā Shāh and the other of gigantic ruins, traditionally assigned the name of Pāṇḍava temples, which indicate that the place must have had quite an ancient existence. Both of them are just half a kilometer apart. The present temple ruins, on the basis of structural evidence and construction pattern seem to belong to King Lalitā Ditya's time.The ruins still lay buried in the ground as no excavations of any kind have so far been made.However, the overground projections of the site, its shape, dimensions and size indicates a great degree of its similarity with the basement structure of Avantiswāmī temple of Avantīpurā and Martand temple of Mattan in Kashmir. The temple premises measures some 150′ x 150′ with a central structure of at least 20′ x 20′ (Plate XXI).A deep well exists at the southern corner, which is now almost covered with bushes in a betraying manner. Huge carved and uncarved stone slabs, giant stone pillars and other stone fragments lies scattered everywhere, and it is only after proper excavations and detailed evaluations of the site that some concrete conclusions can be arrived at. However the literary evidences as put down in previous chapters and the overground observations are also quite encouraging and point out towards the aforesaid assumptions, that the temple structure might have been a Vihāra, probably Kriḍārāmā Vihāra of Rājataraṇgini[14]. We have already seen that as per Rājataraṇgini, "Lalitā Ditya while receiving fruits had constructed Phalpura, while taking leafs (Parṇa) Parṇotsasva (Poonch) and while at play (Kriḍān) the Vihāra of Kriḍārāmā. Stien has identified Parṇotsva with Poonch. Regarding Kriḍārāmā Vihāra he says that "It has not been referred to again and its position is unknown". But the narration in Rājataraṇgini of the construction of Krīḍārāmā Vihāra by Lalitā Ditya is found in the chapter and place where most of the events connected with the region (Poonch-Mendhar) have been described. It can therefore be presumed that the Vihāra of Krīḍārāmā must lie in the close vicinity of Poonch, most probably at Sakhī Maidān or Śānkheya Parivien, where seven or eight hundred years earlier to Lalitā Dityas own time, King Milinda had encountered Nāgsen in a discussion, got defeated by him and constructed a Vihāra, known as Milind Vihāra[16], and probably adorned it with a gold image of Buddha as he was a very rich monarch. This Vihāra of Milinda in the course of time (some eight centuries) got damaged and buried. And after King Lalitā Dityās episode with breaking - in of the horse, meeting with the two singing and dancing girls and coming across two statues of Keśva after excavation of the site, he might have felt to pay his reverence to the sacredness of the place by constructing a new Vihāra or renovate the older one.As he played (Krīḍān) with the horse over the vast open space available there, the Vihāra might have been called as Kriḍārāma Vihāra.

Again we see that Huentsang after his two and a half years stay in Kashmir, came to Poonch via Toshmaidān Pass. While on his way to Rājouri he first came to Poonch (Mendhar). Probably he wanted to visit a "Bodh Vihāra much known for his miracles" in those days as recorded by him[17].This Vihāra in the vicinity of Poonch could be no other Vihāra but the one at Sakhī Maidān, as Lalitā Ditya and Huentsang are almost contemporary.

As seen from various traditions, right from King Menānder's time to the present day,the Sakhīmaidān site had been a seat of religious sanctity and spiritual merit and therefore there is a great probability that the fourth Buddhist council convened by Kaniśka (78 A.D.), about 200 years after King Menānder's own time, may have been held at this place, to facilitate the attendence of monks and priests coming from outside the valley, who may not have liked to cross high altitude passes leading to the valley.It is also noteworthy that the massive archaeological ruins at Sakhīmaidān is the only of its kind outside the valley and the site is extremely beautiful and pleasant.According to Sarlā Khoslā : "It is not possible to locate with certainty the place where this council was held, but it is almost certain that it must have been held either in Kashmir itself or in its vicinity[18].

Various names regarding the sight of the fourth council have been recorded by the authors, such as Kunḍal Van Vihāra, Karnāvatārisvan Vihāra or Kuvāna Monastery in Kashmir[19].The monastery had been specially constructed by Kuśāṇa King Kaniśka as a venue for the 4th Buddhist council, and the probability of the council meeting being held at this sight i.e. Sānkheya Parivien or Milind Vihāra cannot be ruled out. Rather it can be supported to have been held in the vicinity of Sakhīmaidān on the following grounds :-

a) The influence of the Buddhist triumph over Menānder and other higher sections of the ruling class may not have vanished as yet in Kaniśka's time as the historic episode was only some 200 years old.

b) The scholars from outside the valley, including Aśvaghosha from Benāres and others could come to this place without having to climb tiresome high altitude mountains and trekking difficult Himālayan routes leading into the valley.

c) Thirdly the Mendhar valley on the traditional route from Kashmir to the rest of the country was easily accessible.

d) The Kuvāṇa monastery appears to be none else but the Kuśān monastery named after Kuṣāṇa King Kaniśkā, and this Kuvān, Kundal Van or Karnāvatārisvan Vihāra must be traced somewhere in the vicinity of village, named after the same Vihāra and is still preserved in the place name of Kālāban, a few kilometers away, just in front of the already described historic ruins of Sakhī Maidān Archaeological site.

Therefore the detailed explorations, excavations and evaluations of other probable Buddhist sites in the vicinity of Sakhīmaidān-Kālāban area, and the preservation of those already located is all that is urgently needed for providing further material evidence to the present monograph and also to ascertain the fact, whether the enormous work of the fourth Buddhist council was deposited there[21].

Thus we feel that the hermitage of Śākya Munī changed to Sānkhey Parvein of *Milind Panhö*, and later Milind Vihāra added to its complex, the Kuvān Vihārā or Kundāl van Vihārā of Kaniṣkā's time and then changed its name to Kriḍārāmā Vihāra of Lalitāditya, which 7 or 8 hundred years later, around the time of Aurangzeb - Shāh Jehān, might have undergone further changes and emerged as a Ziārat named after Chotai Shāh, who was descendent Gaddinishīn of a saintly person named Sheru Shāh. An interesting and informative account of the history of Ziārat as given by its Gaddinashin Mulla Sufi Mohd.Sidiq Chisti Nizāmi belonging to village Behṛā Ḍhakkī is given in the foot note[22].

According to him the Ziārat pertains to Mughal times and is 3 or 4 centuries old. The original Ziārat consists of sacred graves of two children (brother and sister) named Chotai Shāh on account of his being a child. The happening at the sight (as stated in the footnote) provide some important clues to the ancient antiquity and sacredness of the place, and a close relationship and a similarity of contents of the traditional beliefs pertaining to this Ziārat and the one of Pir Farid-ud-Din and Asrār-ud-Din Sāhib at Kaśṭwāṛ[23].

Shāh Derā :

According to J.N. Ganhār the term Shāhderā is derived from Sanskrit term Siṁh Dwārā i.e. lions gate. It appears that the place was on the ancient route to Kashmir valley and led to an important Devī shrine dedicated to Devi Chanḍī. The mountain meadow higher up is even today known as Chandimaṛh and on pursing this path one comes across the Kaunsarnāg lake or Vishnū Pād on the way to Shupiān in Kashmir .

There are other probabilities also. The nomenclature Siṁha Dwāra may have something to do with Śākya - Siṁhā or Nāg Sen who while on his way to Śākya Parivien in Mendhar, from Vattanīya's hermitage in Nāgsenī, may have stayed here for some time, for this hermitage in ancient India may have some relation with ancient Shādarhavāhan Vihāra (Hārwan) of Kashmir. Distinguished archaeologist R.C. Kak had "noted five fountain springs Baulies in Shāhdārā village, the best preserved of which flows from a spout, shaped like a tiger's head (Siṁha) from the middle of the back wall. Fragments of stunted fluted columns still exist. The upper panels, are carved with figures of gods, goddesses votaries, warriors with swords and shields and bowman shouting an arrow".

In recent times, the place being situated on the old Mughal route to Kashmir gained prominence on account of the shrine of Shādrā Sharief which has grown round the tomb of a Muslim saint named Pir Gulām Shāh. Born in a Sayeed family of a village Saidā of Kasrāban (now in Pakistan) he is said to have displayed certain miracles at an early stage of life.His preceptor instructed him to move to Shāhdāra in Rajouri (it is interesting to note that, while on his way to his new destination, he stayed at Kālāban (the probable site of Kuvān Vihāra) in Mendhar, just in front of Sakhīmaidān archaeological site, where he meditated for some time and practised austerities. Then he moved to Dhundhāk and again meditated under a big stone, on a dry patch of land in the midst of a roaring stream which on being flooded did not carry him away. He then moved to the present site of Shāhdrā where he lived for seven years meditating and on his death a tomb was erected over his grave which became a centre of pilgrimage both for Hindus and Muslims". Gulab Singh the Dogra ruler is credited to have visited the sight and constructed the shrine.[24]

h) *Loh Devtā* :- It is a Shrine in Krishanā Ghātī over a hill top on the Pedestrian route from Poonch to Mendhar via Jullās. The shrine is stated to have one room of stones, statues of bull, lion and some Goddess.The shrine could possibly be the sight of

Loh - Stompā (Loh Stupā) constructed by King Megh Vāhana's Queen Amrit Prabhā" (8th century A.D.) though Govind Kaul has mentioned it to be situated at Leh[25], in Ladākh.

from the above study of the sites and monuments of the land of Nāgsen's birth,education and spiritual and religious activities, it should be amply clear that the mountain valleys in the Himālayan region of Pir Panchāl and Chandarbhāgā river, particularly those of Kaśṭwāṛ, Rājouri and Poonch had been the seats of Bhuddist meditators and men of spirituality in the early period of Indian history and later subjected to all sorts of aggression, political,religious as well as spiritual.With the change of each and every King and the dynasty, their appears some change in the boundaries and territories of each kingdom or a principality, but the basic religious spirit of sanctity, purity and piousness of this Holy Buddhist land has retained to this day, the sacred message of universal love and brotherhood from India (सर्वें भवन्तु सुखिना and वसुधैव कटुम्बकम्)in the form of dozens of ancient places of pilgrimage, temples, architectural ruins, miraculous sights and Dargāhs, present every where in these valleys of Himālayas of Jammu and are a living testimony to the above noted fact.

Footnotes :

1. Yatī: The term has two meanings. The first being that human being, who has attained a stage of highest spiritual order. The other meaning is associated with a mysterious biologically living, Himālayan mountain creature or snow man, who's physiological details are not as yet available, and who is now being considered as a living species of a higher stage of evolution as compared to human beings.

2. Satī: A female with a firm devotional faith, who persued a nobel cause, or who was compelled to die by a cruel

section of society for the sake of certain traditions, observed by an individual or a group of society as a whole.

3. P.H.K. p28 c.f. Raj., Vol.I, V-317 states that "Mihirkul the tyrant while chasing khaśās in the mountains of Kashmir perused them upto Kaśṭwāṛ".
According to another version of traditional history the ruler of Suru (Ladakh), around 4th century A.D. attacked Chīrhaṛ (Kaśtwāṛ via Bhotcol and sub-dued the whole area upto Thāthri and named it as Bhot Nagar. (T.D.D)

4. Pritam Krishan, *Bhadawahī Lok Sāhitya* (Hindi)

5. Dr. P.K. Kaul "Rājā of Kāndā" - Daily Excelsior, Jammu dated Feb.16,1992.

6. No ancient monument is presently traceble except a temple. The temple structure is of comparatively recent origin where an extremely fine 80 kg, black stone sculpture of mother Goddess, which has a powerful bewitching effect on the beholder is of ancient origin (common belief 2000 years). The origin of shrine is shrouded in mystery. Many legends are associated with it. But the most popular and accepted version is that, "once a shepherd while grazing his livestock in the nearby forests spotted a small but extremely beautiful small girl on a rock. He was astonished to see the innocent girl at such an isolated place. Taking her as a child, who had lost her way, he lifted the girl on his back with the idea of carrying her to his own home, till her parents are traced. To her utmost surprise, the weight of the girl child on his back began to increase suddenly, so much so that he was compelled to take some rest. Accordingly he placed the girl under the shade of a Deodār tree, but after a while when he wanted to lift her for onward journey, he had to see an unbelievable. The girl was nowhere there and instead stone image of the Godess was lying before his eyes. The place was assigned the name Sri (Laxmī) by the shepherd. A simple stone structure was constructed there, by him and he began to act as Pujāri (worshiper) of the shrine.
According to J.N. Ganhār (Jammu Shrines and

Pilgrimages) the Goddess resided at Hāri Parbat in Kashmir Valley where according to an ancient legend she had killed the great Demon of Satisar lake by throwing a pebble on his head at the place of Hārī Parbat Hillock. Later she took the form of a small girl and asked a shepherd boy standing close by to carry her on his back. The boy was perplexed but obeyẹd the devine command. As soon as he did so he was wafted into the air, till he flew to the place called Ajāl on the Sarthal mountain slopes. Here he stopped to take some rest. But as soon as he did so the divine load turned into a stone image and a spring of crystal clear water gushed out from under the spot. The local chieftain Agār Dev who heard about this strange phenomenon came early next morning to pay homage and obeisance. According to a different version, the Devi appeared before the Rājā in a dream.Next day when he went to the resplendent image, he remembered his dream over night and ordered the image to be lifted to his place, when it had been carried about a mile, to Ajāl /Agār village the men carrying it put it on the ground, to rest a while. But when they tried to lift it again, they could not do so, try however hard they might. So the Rājā got a temple made there. Short of myth, it must be clear that the fine sculpture was brought to Ajāl from Kashmir by some devotee in Calamitous times. General Zorāwar Singh Kalhuriā during his Governorship of Kaśtwāṛ (1825-35) is stated to have obtained a grant from Gulāb Singh authorising utilization of income from the surrounding forest for the maintenance of the shrine. The shrine is highly venerated. The Goddess is believed to grant every wish to her devotees and in particular she is believed to grant children to baren couples.

The historical roots of the traditions associated with Shārikā can be traced probably from Bāṇā's mention in *Harsh Charita*, wherein it is stated that the confidential deliberations of Nāga King Nāgsen were divulged by Shārikā bird and that led to his destruction by Samudra Gupta (335-375 A.D.). Now Nāgsen and Ganapatī Nāg were the rulers of Aryavarṭa about the middle of 4th century A.D. (A.I.P. 379-80). As per Kashmirī traditionals Shārikā is the representative bird of Devi Shārikā and nobody kills it in the mountainous regions.

7. T.S.J. P.123.

8. A small but beautiful spot near Drabshālā on the left bank of River Chinab on the Baṭoṭe Kaśṭwāṛ National Highway.

9. Kāṇḍot was the main village of Chief of Kāṇḍās territory, a strategic location between the principalities of Chambā, Kāṇḍot, Churāh and Kaśṭwāṛ around 1086 A.D.

10. Jañgalwāṛ is the Western extremity of Kāniṇī - Ajāl on the left bank of Chinab.

11. R.T. IV, V 201-215 and 246-64. Lalitā Ditya, while returning to Kashmir from an expedition, was helped by his Minister Caṇkuna to cross a river in Panchnad with the help of two miraculous stones, which the minister threw in the river to dry it and Lalitā Ditya crossed the river. Naturally, the King got tempted towards the miraculous stone which he exchanged with the very valuable statue of Buddha. This statue was carried to the valley of Kashmir by Cankuna and installed there in a Bodh Vihāra/ Chaityā (most probably at Parihāspur, the new capital of the King).

12. R.T. IV, V 265-76 states that once it so happened that Lalitā Ditya took a horse to break it in, as he was proficient in the knowledge of horses. There in a lonely place he saw a maid sing and another dance. After completion of their performance the two bowed slightly and went away. He came day by day to that place and saw the two girls perform exactly in the same fashion. He came up to them and questioned them in his surprise. He was told by the girls that they were dancing girls belonging to a temple. The village of Surāvar Dhamana was their home and that they performed this dancing and singing at the spot, under the direction of their mother, which their descend makes them incumbent and by which they get their living. The custom handed down by tradition had become fixed in their family and its reason they did

not know, nor any one else.

"When the King had heard from them this information he was astonished and next day had the whole of the ground dug up by workmen. Then when they had made a deep excavation,the King saw as announced (by them) two decayed temples with doors closed. On opening of the folding doors he saw there two (images of) Keśavā which as the letters engraved on the bases (Pithās) showed, had been made by Rāma and Laxman. The illustrious King after errecting a separate stone building by the side of (temple) Vishnu Parihās (Keśava) had the (image of) Rāma Swamin consecrated there. Thus the two images of Gods were put up by Queen Cakramardikā by the side of (Śivā) Cakreśvara after she had obtained it on request from the King 265-276)."

It is interesting to note that Stien has recorded no comments on these verses probably for lack of clarity or probably he did not visit Rāmkund site situated as it was astray from the main route to Mendhar Valley, and as he could not locate the place in question. Stien had visited, Poonch in 1892 A.D. and had identified certain places of Poonch as mentioned in Rājatraṅgini such as Loharkot (Loran). Attālikā (Atoli), Swarnik (suran) etc.

It is quite possible that the name Parihāspur assigned to the new capital of Kashmir by Lalitāditya might be the result of an inspiration from Mendhar, after recovering from there the Gold image of Buddhā and two idols of Keśava as mentioned above.

In verse 184 of the same book we come across the statement of Kalhaṇa that Laltā Ditya, while taking leaf (Parṇa) constructed Parṇotswa (i.e. Poonch) while at play constructed the Vihārā of Krīḍārāmā (probably Sakhī Maidān site) and while taking fruits constructed Phalpura. As these events in Rājatraṅgini are recorded with the verses and events related with Buddhā and Keśava statues, followed just after the story of construction of Parnotsva, Kriḍārāmā Vihāra and Phalpua, the aforesaid statues must have been found in the vicinity of Rāmkund Sakhīmaidān site in Mendhar Poonch.

The home of two dancing and singing girls of Rājatraṅgini narration (V 264-74) has been recorded as Surāvar Dhamana. This village by present name of Dharana can still be located near Rāmkund in the Mendhār Valley.

13. The Rājput caste Jajwān is similar to scores of caste names of Bhales valley in Bhadarwāh and Kaśṭwāṛ therefore proves some sort of ethenic relationship between the two.
14. Stien R.T., Vol1. IV-V184, Vol.III-v--1256.
15. Ibid.
16. M.P. Treck.
17. T.H. Beal. p.200
18. B.K.Sarlā. p.44-45. f.n. 26
19. H.R.F.B. c.f. Ibid.
20. Ibid. p. 134-35. Also B.K. Fidda. P.54. Aśavgosh was a resident of Saket and belonged to a Brahmin family. He was a literary giant and was well versed in grammar, four Vedas, six treatise on Vedāngas, conversant with Tripitakās, of 18 schools of Buddhism and a laureate of literature. Due to his literary genius he was invited by Kātyāyinīputra to Kashmir where he compiled the Vibhāśas.

    He is also known as the third president of the Buddhist council held in Kashmir during the days of Kaniśaka. He is known as the preceptor of Kaniśka. One of his texts entitled "Sariputra Prakaraṇa have been located from Central Asia".
21. (i) B.K. Sarla PP.44-45. Vastness of Buddhist literature as Mahā-Vibhaśās of Sarvastivāda School, that was produced in Kashmir shows that this region must have had the benefit of being venue of a gathering of learned scholars of the Age".

    (ii) B.K Fidda. P. 21-22. It has further been given by the Chinese sources that the final decision of the council were engraved on copper plates and deposited in a stūpa under orders of the King (Kaniska). The problem of location of these copper Plates still engages the attention of scholars throughout the world.

    (iii) R.T. Vol. i. P. 144. f.n. 188- "The place where the work of the council is deposited was identified as Uśkūr near Bārāmulā. Mr. Garrik carried out extensive excavations in 1882 but failed to get anything.

22. According to Sufi Mohd Siddiq, "One descendent from a distant spiritual elder named Sheru Shāh, resided at village Chajlā. Some 2 Kilometres North West of Chotai Shāh Ziarat at Sakhīmaidān. He had two children and a wife. The family being descendants from a saintly person possessed miraculous powers, but were for certain unknown reasons, forbidden from using them. The family at occasions talked about it, and the two children over-heard them. Although the family was desperately poor and helpless, it did not use the power of the elders to achieve worldly comforts.

One day it so happened, that the two children of this Sheru Shāh lineage, while grazing their few castles near Sat Mangat or Segi- Di-Dhab (Water Pond) had a conversasion with each other. The younger female child wished to her brother saying that had they also many castles like those of their neighbours they too would have been rich and enjoy life. But she could not understand why their parents, who possess the power of their ancestors to have anything including cattles, did not use it for removing the poverty of the family. On hearing the natural wish of the innocent sister the boy was moved and accordingly he consoled his sister by saying that he would test the powers of his forefathers and try to fulfill her wish. Accordingly the boy took few grains of a wild pomegranate fruit from nearby Trees and threw them in the pond Seri- Di - Dhab wishing that the power of their fore fathers may turn them into milk yielding buffalow; and strangely it actually happened. The brother and the sister were excited with joy and shouted in happiness pointing towards the swimming buffaloes in the pond. People from adjuring fields and pastures ran towards the children and the pond, and thence to the village of Chajlā, where they informed the parents, that the forbidden family secret stands revealed by the two children. The father in a fit of anger ran towards the site to punish the children. On the other hand the joy of the two children had also vanished, and fear of punishment had caught hold of their mind. Consequently they ran towards the site of present Ziārat. At this spot they again wished to the mother earth to accept them back, so as to spare the family from any curse for revealing the family secret. Consequently the two children disappeared at the spot. By this time the father of the children also reached there, but nothing could be done now. Instead he was all sorry for losing his temper. Feeling helpless he wished that the power of his forefathers and ancestors, which was not to be revealed by the lineage, may now be bestowed upon these children and may appear after sometime. Two graves of these children are lying at the spot which forms the main Ziārt of Chotā Shāh, the popular name for the boy. As for the details pertaining to Sheru Shāh, his family descendants and the family origin is concerned, nothing is available. But from the antiquity of the region plenty of religious tradition and.association of the place with King Menānder and Bhikśu Nāgsen, it should be no wonder if we assume that the ancestor of Sheru Shāh or Chotai Shāh lineage was no else but a person associated with Nāgsen himself or if there is some difficulty for assuming Sheru Shāh as Nāgsen, whose marriage account is not known, the term Sheru Shāh of the abovereferred tradition could be a traditional title of the saintly person Nāgsen,the lion of the Hills of *Milind Panho*. Śākya Simhā of Tariekh Hassan, who is said to have preached Buddhism in Kashmir some 100 years before Kaniṣka might have also resided at Rāmkund or Sakhīmaidān, and whose lineage,in Mohammedan period might have accepted Islam, and accordingly forbidden their lineage, neither to reveal the secret power of their forefathers, nor use it in future. The village of Jhajhlā is hardly one kilometre away from Sakhī Maidān and Rāmkund temple site.

Another very interesting and curious thing pertaining to him is repeated around the same very time but at a different place, and the place is none else but Kaśṭwāṛ, the ancient links of which with Nāgsen had already been established some fifteen centuries earlier than the events of Chotai Shāh's time.

23. J.N. Ganhar - According to this tradition a Muslim elder (Shāh Farid -Ud-Din) came to Kaśṭwāṛ during the reign of Rājā Jai Singh (1656-1664 A.D.) for the propagation of Islam. Prior to his coming to Kaśṭwāṛ he had stayed at Sirāj and Dodā, where he is stated to have married himself with a Hindu girl. He finally settled at Kaśṭwāṛ where he met with success in his mission.

Shāh Faried was blessed with a number of saintly children. Two of them Shāh Akhyār-Ud-Din and Syed Anwār-ud-Din lie buried in the Ziārat in which lies the tomb of Shāh Faried himself while the tomb of his third child Shāh Asrār-ud-Din, who like Chotai Shāh died at the young age of 16 years, lies buried separately at a distance.

Many miracles are associated with Shāh Faried-ud-Din once he is said to have restored the eye sight of a neighbour. The local Rājā is said to have won against a neighboring chief, when in the midest of a loosing battle he prayed to the saint.

His third son Shāh Asrār-ud-Din Sāhib who was perhaps the youngest of all was greatly advanced in spirituality. It is said of him that he restored to life one of his playmate Hindu Youth. As he was strolling he found an Arthī (death procession) being taken to cremation ground lying close to the Chaugān (play field) of Kaśṭwāṛ. On inquiry he was told that corpse was that of his playmate and consequently he felt sad and immediately directed the Pal bearers to place the Arthī on the ground. He then touched the dead body with his stick saying, "Get up, Get up, you still owe me a game" and strange enough the dead man was restored back to his life. But the father is stated to have got annoyed which resulted in the death of Asrār-ud-Din and a separate burrial for his youngest son". Incidentally this incident conveys many things common with the Ziārat of Chotai Shāh of Sakhimaidan.

24. Daily Excelsior------------------ Aug.12th 1993.

25. B.K. Sarla, P. 87 f.n. 26.

ANNEXURE I

JAMBŪ DVĪP

The city of Sāklā finds mention not only as the capital of Menānder's kingdom, and that of many other subsequent rulers, but it finds mention also as "Sākal Dvīp" in the Buddhist literature of that time. In *Milind Panho* Śākal Dvīp is said to exist within Jambū Dvīp, thereby making the later more important.The later writers of Brahmanic literature (Purāṇās) seem to have used the term, Jambū Dvīp, in their compositions without mentioning its logical geographical limits.Their use of the term and estimations of the tract, seems to have been based on the usual traditional beliefs, and almost each of them used it in the form of a traditional popular Sanskrit saying found at the termination of every Sanskrit Purāṇic text "BHUVANKOSH VARNANODYOTE JAMBŪDVĪPE BHĀRATVARŚE UTTARĀKHANDE ETC." To me the term Jambūdvīp and the above referred popular Sanskrit saying has something more to tell us in the form of history, geography, linguistic, as well as politics of the region in ancient and early medieval times.

Actually the word Dvīp used frequently in Purānic literature seems to be a parallel for the Persian term Doab[1]. The birth place of king Menander as mentioned in *Milind Panhö* lay in the Dvīp of Alasandā or Kābul valley. Sāgardeo (Sāgar Dvīp) has been mentioned in Greek records for Saurāsṭra[2]. Again we come across two terms i.e. Jambū Dvīp and Sākal Dvīp in *Milind Panhö*.

All these references pertain to Pre-Christian era. Around the time of advent of Kuṣānas i.e. 1st century A.D. we find another mention in the name of Śāka Dvīp for the region just above Sindh delta. These terms for Dvipās are therefore the oldest records which seem to have a close linguistic identity with the Persian term Doāb.In both, Sanskrit and Persian "Dvī" and "Do" stand for two, and "P" and "Ab" stand for water.But whereas in Sanskrit Dvīp means a tract of land surrounded by water, the Persian "Doāb" means a tract of land bounded on two sides by rivers (or river water). Śākalā or Siālkot also lies between the mighty Chināb and Rāvī and therefor by it is meant Do-āb of Siālkot or Śākal Dvīp. The Śākal Dvīp of *Milind Panhö* is stated to exist in Jambū Dvīp and consequently the concept of Jambū Dvīp.

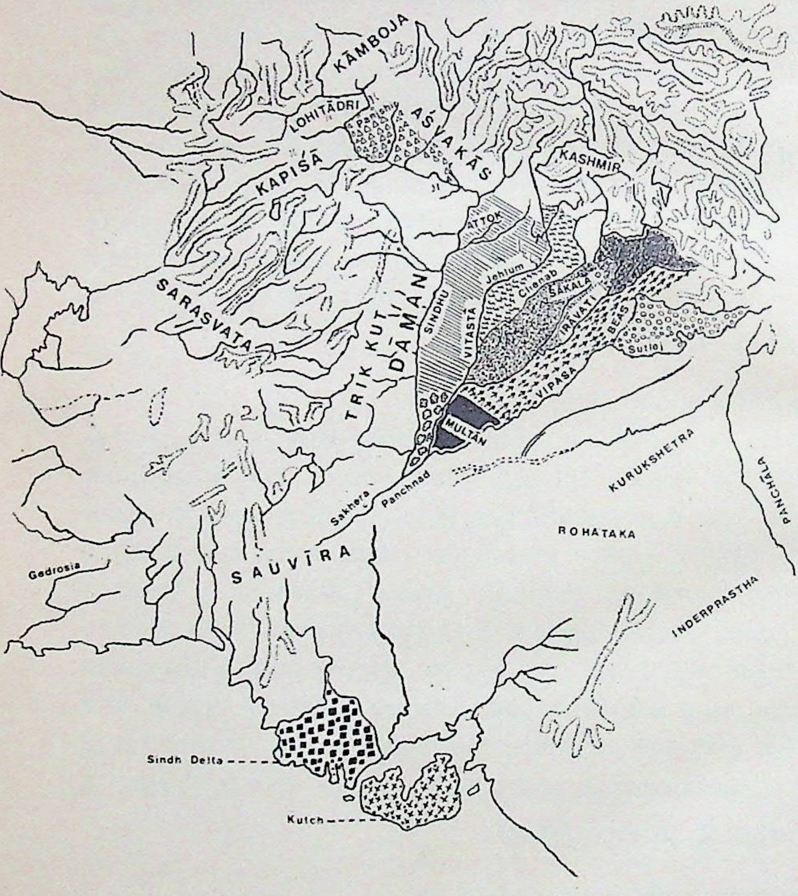
The oldest mention of the term in the Indian literature is close to the time of *Milind Panhö* when Jammu hill region and its adjoining mountains valleys attracted many religious persons, Buddhist saints, hermits and recluse for spiritual attainments, persecuted as they were by invading Greeko-Bactrain hoards (as by King Menander) from the north-west, successors of the Mauryan empire from the East (such as Pushya Mitra) and the intolerant "Śaivite and Nāga rulers from the valley of Kashmir". Consequently a lot of people moved to the Himālayan valleys close to the borders of Kashmir.The Sanskritised nomenclature of many places in these valleys clearly indicates the presence of the powerful Brahmanic tradition, and religious character of the people inhabiting this region. Rakshit Tal (Guarded slopes of Milind Panho). Bhadrāvakāsh (Bhadarwāh), Kaśṭvāṭa (Kaśṭwāṛ), Hiuntā (Chanenī, Himāvant of Purāṇic literature), Parṇotsava and Rājāpuri (Poonch- Rājourī of Huentsang), Rudhār (Rudra Dhār) and scores of other names point out towards this fact. The well laid out structure of medieval temples at Balor, Krimchī and Babbāpur also indicate that some religious elements had moved from Panjāb to this tract of land, now called as Dugar (Dungaṛh),lying between the two rivers Ravī and Chināb and surrounded on the north east by two rivulets of Kanḍī area namely Tawī (Taushit Bhāskrḥ) and UJJ.

This small tract of land, of the shape of a cupola "Ḍunā" derived from Ḍūn, (a well guarded valley), and enclosed on three sides by river waters gave rise to a small Dvīp of Jāmbulochana's place and was accordingly named as Jambū Dvīp, in the religious scriptures written and composed in this region of ancient India. On account of political domination by the rulers of Śāklā of the whole North Western India, and the predominant religious character of the literature that was composed during this period (Purāṇas) in this region, the whole of Do-āb of Śākalā or Śākal Dvīp, was mentioned to exist in Jambū Dvīp for all the geographical references. With the passage of time use of the term seems to have become a tradition. It is interesting to note that in the hill region of Jammu we have a similar tradition of assigning the common name to many rivers[3], many places[4] and castes.[5] More interesting is the fact that this Brahmanic class as well as its influence in Himālayan Valleys including Kashmir[6] is still dominant both in number and power.

The terms Dvīp and Do-āb have a great deal of similarity in phonetics and etymology. Probably this is the very reason that we not only find some seven geographical units of land tracts mentioned as Doābs of Muslim India[7] but find seven Dvīpas of medieval Purāṇic Hindu India also. These Muslim Doābs and

Jambū Dvīp – Sapt Sindhu---Sapt Dvīp Nav Khand
Of
Bharat Varsa
IN
(PURANIC INDIA & INDIA OF LATER MEDIEVAL TIME)

1 JAMBŪ DVĪP ▩
2 DO–ĀB OF RECHANĀ ▒
3 DO–ĀB OF JETCH ≈
4 DO–ĀB OF SINDH SĀGAR ▧
5 DO-ĀB OF BĀREE →
6 DO–ĀB OF SHIMĀULI-KUCHEE ■
7 DO–ĀB OF JANOOB KUCHEE ✿
8 DO–ĀB OF JĀLANDHAR ○
9 DO–ĀB OF ALSANDHĀ △
10 ŚAKA DVĪP (SINDH DELTA) ▪
11 SĀGAR DEO SAURASTRĀ–KUTCH ×


KĀMBOJA
LOHITĀDRI
Panjshir
AŚVAKĀS
KAPIŚĀ
KASHMIR
ATTOK
SARASVATA
SINDHU
VITASTĀ
Jehlum
Chenab
ŚAKALA
IRĀVATI
BEAS
Sutlej
VIPĀSA
TRIK KUT DĀMAN
MULTĀN
KURUKSHETRA
PANCHĀLA
Sakhera
Panchnad
ROHATAKA
SAUVĪRA
Gedrosia
INDERPRASTHA
Sindh Delta
Kutch

Hindu Dvīpas of North Western India can be described as under (Map sketch No.5.):-

1. Doāb of Sindh Sāgar:

It is probably the biggest of the seven Doābs of Panjāb and lies between the river Indus (Sindhu) and Jehlum and includes the regions between Attok and Rāwalpinḍi to Derā Dān Panāh. This is one of the seven Dvīpas of Purāṇic India, may be Kuśā Dvīpa of Matsya *Purāna* or Śāmali Dvīp of *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* or Patanjalīs *Māhā Bhāśya*; where butter and wine were the product of the seas (rivers) but the exact Purāṇic nomenclature cannot be traced for the time being. The lowermost portion of Doāb of Sind Sāgar forms the Doāb of Janoob-e-Kuchee.

2. Do-āb of Janoob-e-Kuchee:

This is the lowermost portion of the Do-āb of Sindh Sāgar and lies between river Sindh and Chināb (Which now includes Rāvi and Jehlum also) below Dehrā Dān Panāh, and upto the confluence of Sindh river with Panchnad (five rivers). Do-āb of Shimauli Kuchee, which is part of Doāb of Bāṛee is adjacent to it, just across the river Chināb, below Multān upto its confluence with Satluj and Beās. This may be identified with Kraunch Dvīp of *Matsya Purāṇ, Vishṇu Purāṇa* or *Pātanjaliś Māhā Bhāśya*.[8] But further identification and place locations is much needed before anything with autority can be said in this regards.

3. Doāb of Jetch:

This Doāb Dvīp or tract of land lies between the rivers Jehlum and Chināb, right from Jehlum and Gujrāt to the point of their confluence. The outer mountain valleys of Poonch, Kotlī, Mīrpur and Rājouri (J&k State) were not the part of this Doāb. These might have been part of Jambū Dvīp of *Milind Panho* and Buddhist Holy land of the contemporary period.

4. Doāb Shiṃaulī Kuchee:

As stated above, the further south Western portion of Bāṛi Do-āb between the rivers Sutlej (which now includes Rāvī and Jehlum also) from Multan in the North to otch in the South West. This is probably the "ŚAMALĪ Dvīp of *MATASYA PURĀṆ* or KAUNCH DVĪP of *PATAÑJALI'S MAHĀBHĀŚYA* or *VISHṆU PURĀṆA.*[9] Further investigation is much needed.

5. Doāb of Rechnā:

This is perhaps the second biggest land tract lying between the rivers Rāvī and Chināb from Jammu in the North East to Tootumbā in the South West. The land tract above Jammu in the North Eastern direction comprising of Dugar (Dūngaṛh)? Kaśṭwāṛ Bhadarwāh and Reāsī lying between these two rivers, formed part of Jambū Dvīp which included Śākal Dvīp or Doāb of Rechanā also. It is because of the central position of this Doāb in the region of seven rivers that all foreign invaders of ancient India made Śākala (Siālkot) capital of their empire, in Bhārat Varsha of ancient literature. Lahore formed part of the adjacent Doāb of Bāṛī. Jambū Dvīp must be located at the higher grounds of this region (See map sketch) adjacent to the guarded slopes of *Milind Panho* and early medieval period, which now included Kashmir also, and must therefore represent the tract of land of present Doāb of Rechnā in Pakistan, and Himālayan valleys in the outer hills adjacent to the valley of Kashmir in India, as also the valley of Kashmir itself. This region of Panjāb i.e. Doāb of Rechnā had always been the region of activity and creation (Rachnā). Most of the Purāṇic text that close with the usual dictum "Jambū Dvīpe Bhārat vershe etc". must have been composed within or around this very tract of land. This very region contains the richest folkloric traditions of Panjāb; folk tales, folk songs and folk dance. The lovesome and passionate folk songs dealing with the eternal love affairs of Panjābis mostly pertain to these two rivers, that make this Do-āb. The Śasi-Punū, Heer-Rāñja, Sohni-Mahiwāl and similar other tales are associated with the rivers of Chināb and Rāvī alone.

6. Bāṛī Doāb:

Is the tract of land lying between the river Rāvī and Satluj (or Gaṛāh as it is called near Teebhee Havalee, right from Govindpur in Panjāb (India) to Havelee Futtipoor in South West Panjāb (Now Pakistan). Its equivalent name in Purāṇic literature needs elaborate investigations of the relevant records.

7. Doāb of Jullunder:

This piece of land tract lies between the rivers Satluj and Beas right from Hoshiarpur and Nādaun in North East to Attāree in the South West.

From the above it is clear that seven Dvīpas and nine Khandās of Purāṇic India or of early medieval times, are somewhat similar to above seven Dvīpas or Doābs of recent times but more needs to be said about Jambū Dvīp which name has been included in Pātanjali's *Māhābhāshya, Vāyū Purāṇa, Vishnu Purāṇ and Varāhmihir Saṁhitā*, all of which were composed around the time of Guptas i. e. 5th to 8th century A.D.

We find mention of Jambū Dvīp even in some other later writings of recent times such as *Vāsukī Purāṇa* of 18th century. But the earliest mention of Jambū Dvīp can be traced to the time of *Milind Panho*. Prior to which time we do not find any mention of Jambū Dvīp any where. Jambū Dvip of *Milind Panho's* time must be located in the vicinity of Menander's Kingdom, adjacent to Śākala, guarded slopes, Sānkheya Parivien, Kāñjaṅgala, Buddhist Holyland and the country of Śākalā. All this description of Jambū Dvīp of *Milind Panho's* time quite satisfactorily agrees with the location of Dungaṛh, or Balor-Krimchi foot hills through Shivālak valleys of Jammu hill region, which formed part of Menānder's empire or its borders with Suṅgās. The most beautiful and picturesque valley of Mendhar in Poonch, and the archeological ruins at Sakhī Maidān still bear a monumental testimony to such a probability. Later, with the passage of time the boundaries of Jambū Dvīp, in the subsequent writings increased. Accordingly we see that by the time of Pātanjalīs *Mahābhasya, Matsya Purāṇa* and *Vayu Puraṇa* its limits extended to the salt range, as Kshār (salt) has been mentioned as the name of its seas (i.e. rivers)[11] Now Jehlum is the river that passes close to the salt range in Panjāb and indicates the extent to which the limits of Jambū Dvīp might have extended from the time of Menānder to the time of Guptas. Patanjali assigns the name of Jambū Dvip to the existance of Jambū tree i.e. Jaman fruit tree which is predominantly found in Jammu region. By the time *Neelmat Purāṇ* was written the limits of Jambū Dvīp extended further and included Kashmir Valley in it, and in one or two centuries more i.e. by the time Alberuni came to India, the limit, of Jambū Dvīp got confused and distortions arouse so much that contradictions were noticeable in the same very single composition as noted by Alberuni also. Quoting *Vāyu Purāṇa* Alberuni says that in it the description of Jambū Dvīp is self-contradictory. There at one place it is stated that centre of Jambū Dvīp is the centre among the Nav-khand Prathmā or the primary nine parts. According to him there are angels on it which again indicates the sacredness of the region and its close relationship with the Jammu hill region.

The diagram prepared by Alberuni on the basis of various Puraṇic texts[12] to show various division of Bhārat Varsha contain in the middle of the diagram, Indra Dvīp, or Madya Deśa, Gandharva lies to the North . West of it. By Gandharva probably is meant present Gāndhāra and by Nāg Dvīpa to the South West of it. By Gandhāra and by Nāg Dvīpa he probably means Rājasthān and Mahārīshtra where snake worship and Nāga cult finds predominance. This middle country is no else a region but Śākal Dvīp of *Milind Panho,* included in the Jambū Dvīp as mentioned there.

The last confussion about the term Bhuvankosh can be resolved if we concentrate upon the usual closing dictum of the specific Purāṇa, which states, "Bhuvankosh vernanodyote" i.e."intended to describe the particular specialities of the specific geographical region under study" and not the part of the whole world or complete Asian sub-continent as is being interpreted by various Sanskrit writers of the times.

From the above it should be clear that the Jambū Dvīp of our ancient literature should be taken as the Himālayan valleys of Shivālak range and other Himālayas of Jammu region, adjacent to the valley of Kashmir, which has richly contributed to the evolution and development of Indian civilization, thought and culture, especially in the religious fields.

Footnotes :

1. It is a strange coincidence that Prof. Rapson (C.H.I.P 550) also feels that Dvīp and Doāb are probably one and the same word (c.f.N.W.I. P 91). In trying to prove that in *Milind Panho* the word Dvīp is used in the same sense in which Persian word Doāb is used, (the land lying between two rivers), he says that for instance, the Rechanā Doāb between Chināb and Ravī was often called Śākal Dvīp.

2. Ibid. Rapson's identification of Strabo's Geographical names, among other places also identifies, Pātālene or the country of Pātāla for Indus Delta and Sarasotas for Saurāstra. Sigārdis which he does not identify seems to be a correct form of Sāgar Dvīp or Kutch.

3. We have some 8 or 9 Tawīs in Jammu Kāṅgṛā mountain region, some 4 Devikās and 3 Sindhūs in Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh.

4. We have a lot of place names not only in Jammu having common suffixes but in many cases they have similarity to the place and caste names of distant countries like Irān; such as:
Kilhotrān (- 'an' suffix) In Jammu/Bhales
Ahān— In Kashmir; Isfahān, Bazaragan - 'an' suffix, Irān.
Tehrān etc.)
"_ote" and "Kot" are other common suffixes Batote, Balote, Ratnote etc. and Surankot, Balakot, etc.

5. For similarity of caste names please see Sherāzā Hindi Cultural Academy, Jammu.
"-an" and "outra" are the common suffixes in Hudreds of caste names in Jammu and its Himālayan mountains valleys.

6. There is hardly any class of people other than Brahmins among Hindus of Kashmir and the Brahmins of Jammu region have also maintained their dominant influences in the religious and political circles of the region.

7. Alberuni has dealt with the subject of Dvīpas, as enumerated in Pātañjalī's *Mahābhāṣya, Matsya Purāṇa,* which clearly indicates the contradiction in the nomenclature of various Purāṇic Dvipās and their

geographical locations as observed by Alberunī. According to him "each Dvīp and sea has a separate name. The difference of tradition as exhibited by his table (*Alberuni's India*, p. 236) cannot be accounted for in any rational way. These can hardly have sprung from any other source but from arbitrary or accidental changes of the enumeration." To me even the term sea (Sindhu) is arbitrary or accidental. For I feel that use of the term Sapt Sindhu (For Bhārat Varśa) in Vedic India meant only the region of seven Sindhus (Sanskrit - Sindhu = Sea or Indus like rivers which flow in this region). These seven rivers of North, Western India were well known and find mention in Rigveda's Nadī Sukt also. All the invaders that entered India from the North Western direction had to cross these seven rivers one by one to reach the Gangetic plain. River Indus (Sindhu) was the first one they had to cross. As they proceeded further eastward they came across other six rivers of a similar shape and dimension as that of Indus and accordingly the whole of the region was assigned the name of (Sapt Sindhu). The same Sapt Sindhu term was later exploited by the Brahmanic class of Purāṇic period, who had no travel experience of their own, but relied upon the available verbal accounts or official version of the tract as mentioned by the ruling class and was Sanskritised by the Brahmins. By and by this land of seven rivers began to be presumed as the land of seven seas and nine parts (SAPT DVĪP NAV KHAND), as noted in *Alberuni's India* - Vol. I, Chapter XXi, pp.235-36). It is still interesting to note that the land tract lying between river Sindh and the mount Sulamān range, does not find any name associated with the term Dvīp or Doāb but is called by the name of Dāman i.e. foot hills.

8. Dr. Schau - *Alberuni's India* - p.235 - Consult tables.

9. Ibid.

10. Alberuni has also dealt with the topic Jambū Dvīp in the context of a book named Rishī Bhuvankosh and tried to examine and explain various terms mentioned therein (Chapter XXIX, pp. 294-297). The book named Rishī Bhuvan Kosh which he discusses in this chapter

could not be traced from anywhere by any subsequent authors and researchers so far in India or abroad. May be he got one in his time,but he did not discuss anything about this book in his Indica, nor mentioned anything about its author. According to him Bhārat Varsha stretches southwards from Himāvant i.e. Himālaya (I feel this Himāvant may be the Himtā or Hiuntā; present Chanenī region of Jammu; a sacred ancient Indian Tiratha of Sudh Mahadev, just below Rudra Dhār, very much within my thinking of Jambū Dvīp). According to him the inhabitants of his Indica are those to whom alone reward and punishment in another life are destined i.e. who believe in the cycle of rebirth. Again he says that Bhārat Varsha is divided into nine primary parts (Nav Khaṇḍa Prathama) as per this Rishī Bhuvan Kosh and between each two parts or Khanḍās (he means Dvipas) there is a sea. On verification these nine Khanḍās or Dvipās can be enumerated as in the text above. We have already mentioned seven Dvipās or Doābs of North Western Ancient India. In addition to these we find names of other three Dvīpas mentioned by Greeks and Turuśks. These are:

(i) Dvīp of *Alāsandā* of *Milind Panho* (probably land tract between Sindh and Kābul river or Panjshir and Kābul rivers.

(ii) Śāk Dvīp; region just above the delta of Sindh river named so probably because of the Śakās who entered this region via Drangiānā and named it after them. (It is interesting to know that the term Drangā is used in Kashmir and Bhadarwāh also where certain places of specific geographical features are termed as Drangā or Gateway (For Śaka Dvīp please see *Ancient India* -V.D. Mahajan p.344- map Sketch).

(iii) Sāgar Dio (Dvip) for Saurāstra. It is interesting to note that Rapsons identification of Strabos Geographical names in ancient India identifies Pātalene or country of PATALA for Indus Delta

(iv) Doāb of Yamuna with Ganges.

Thus we have some eleven Dvipās of ancient and medieval India. If we carefully study the above eleven

Dvipās or Doābs on the map sketch we find that Doāb of Janoob-e- Kuchee and Doāb of Shimāule nearly form one unit, and same can be said about the Doāb of Jullunder. Thus the number of these Khandās or Dvīpās can be reduced to nine only.

It should be noted here that prior to the time of *Milind Panho*, the North Western India was already known to the outsiders by the name of Sapt Sindhu, having a close resemblance to the seven Doābs of Panjāb as discussed in the text.

11. Alberunis India -p.235, Vol.I.
12. Ibid. p. 296 Vol. I.

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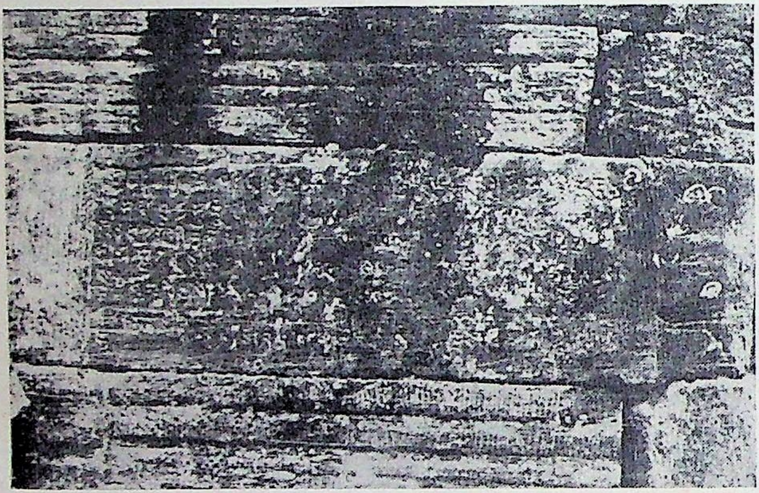

Plate No. VIII Stone slab with aninscription in Shārḍā script 9-12 century. Siāh/Nāgsenī.

Dr P. K. Kaul is a research scholar of repute having to his credit 27 years of research experience, in the diverse feilds of humanities and social sciences. His area study pertains to the hill region of Jammu. Basicaly a science graduate and therefore, with a logical vision he is a teacher of Hindu working as a Professor in Govt. College Jammu. His works include research publications in Linguistics, Folklore, History and Culture, Antiquity and Archaeology of the interior Himalyan region of Jammu as well as Hindi Poetry. His style is both impressive and convincing.

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